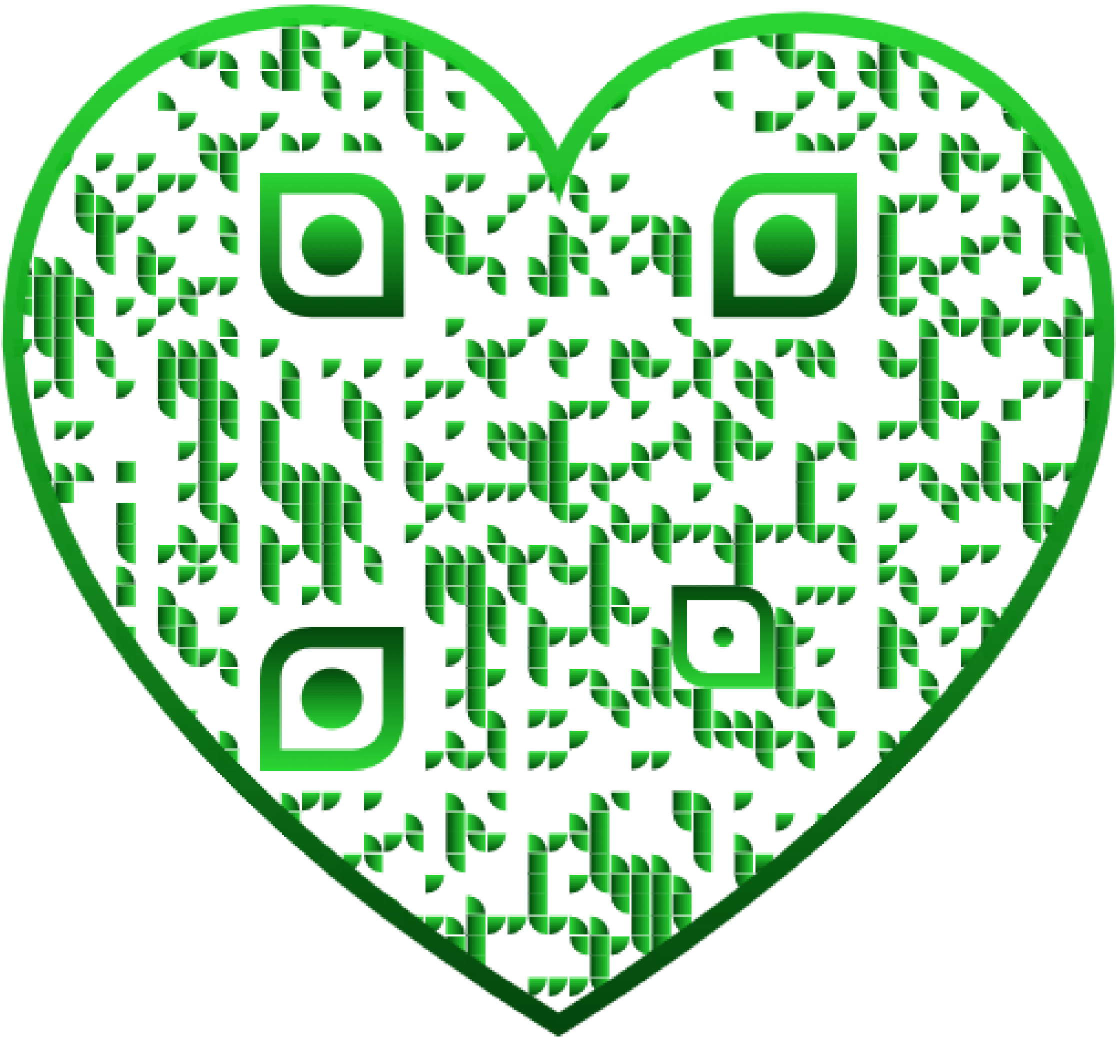
ISSUE #3 2025

ARTDOC

Photography Magazine

WE ARE HUMANITY



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WORLD PRESS PHOTO

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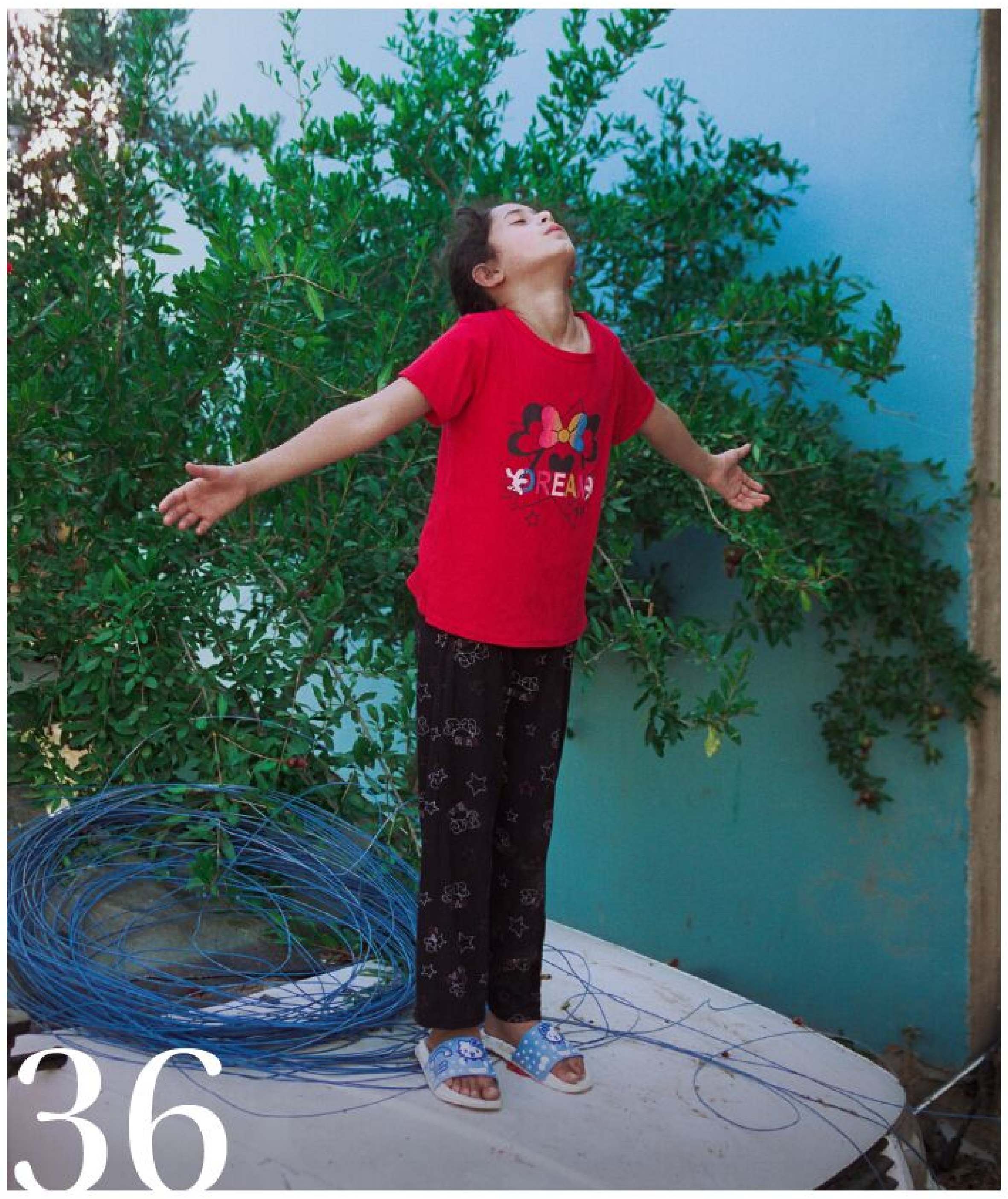

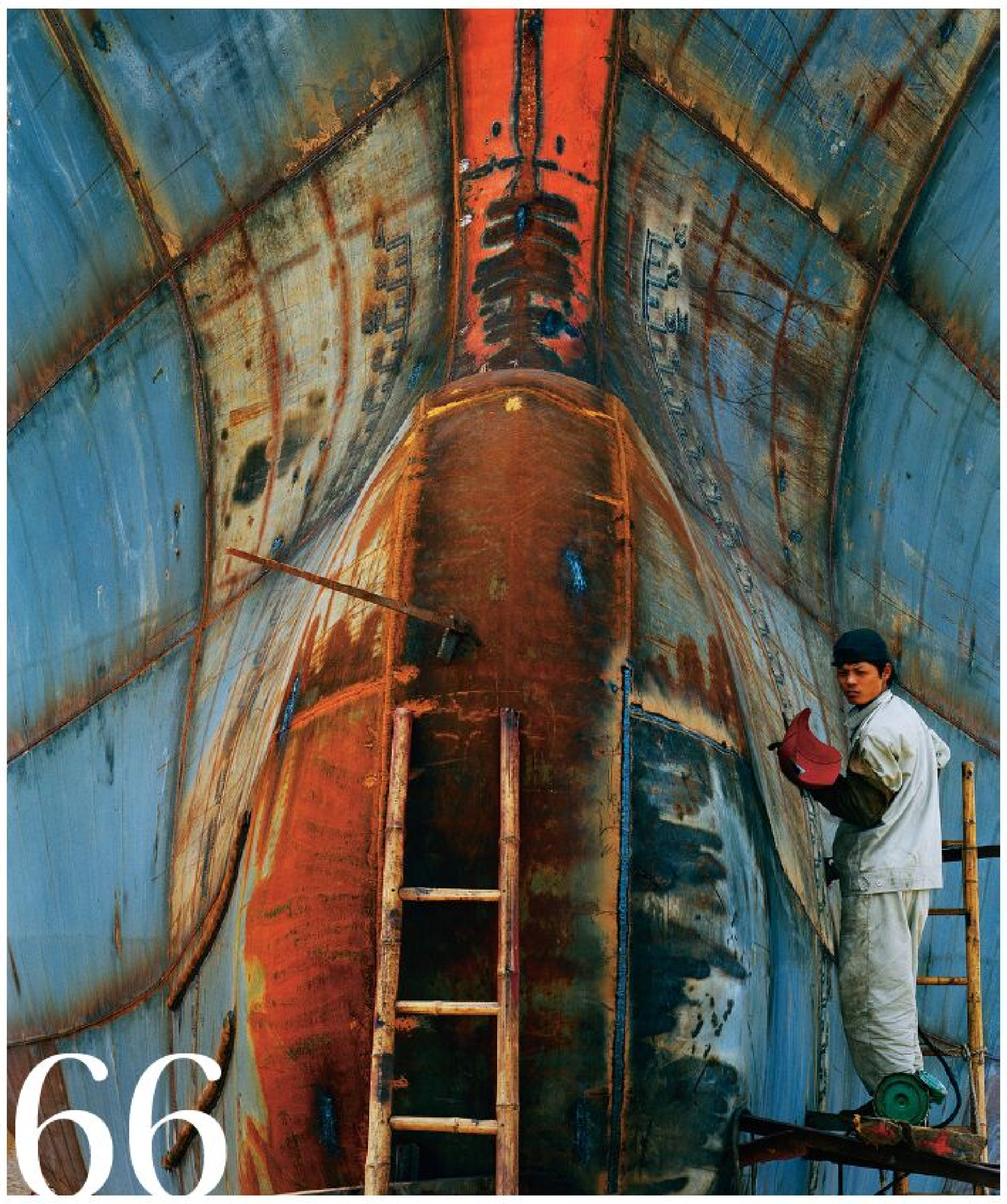

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> We showcase the visual translation of the contemporary state of human life on Earth in these uncertain times.
>
> \- The Artdoc Team

We Are Humanity

In Artdoc Issue #3, 2025, *We Are Humanity*, we showcase the visual translation of the contemporary state of human life on Earth in these uncertain times. We inhabit an era of remarkable technological achievement, yet beneath the surface, the world aches. Inequality widens as some flourish while others struggle to survive. Wars displace millions, and social tensions challenge countless lives. Humanity treads a fragile path marked by moments of both joy and sorrow, but ultimately, we can deeply feel that we all share the same roots of human existence: we are humanity.

While seeking emotional truth, Adam Docker photographed people around the world he met while travelling, fostering empathy with them. “I’ve worked in slums and disaster areas, witnessing a lot of famine, poverty, misery, and human tragedy. I have also documented moments of beauty, strength, and celebration.”

Christian Barnett photographed displaced Ukrainians now living in Germany and Poland. It is a fundamental call for humanity to support those who lack the security of their homes and families. “We all need and want basic things from life: safety, financial security, and loving friends and family,” says Cristian Barnett.

Sakir Khader vividly depicts the profound suffering and intricate lives of Palestinians living in the various enclaves of the West Bank, where ethnic violence is a daily occurrence. Numerous young boys have lost their lives, plunging their mothers into deep sorrow. “They will always be remembered through my photographs as people who lived and loved, rather than just numbers in an archive, without knowing their faces.”

Artdoc Issue #3 also features Andrej Verzola, Anemona Knut, Ingrid Koedood, and Tomislav Marcijuš. They depict the vulnerable lives of individuals across various countries. In Inspiration, we present many more empathetic human stories. And don’t forget the heartwarming photographs we have gathered for the exhibition *Echoes of Being*.

- The Artdoc Team

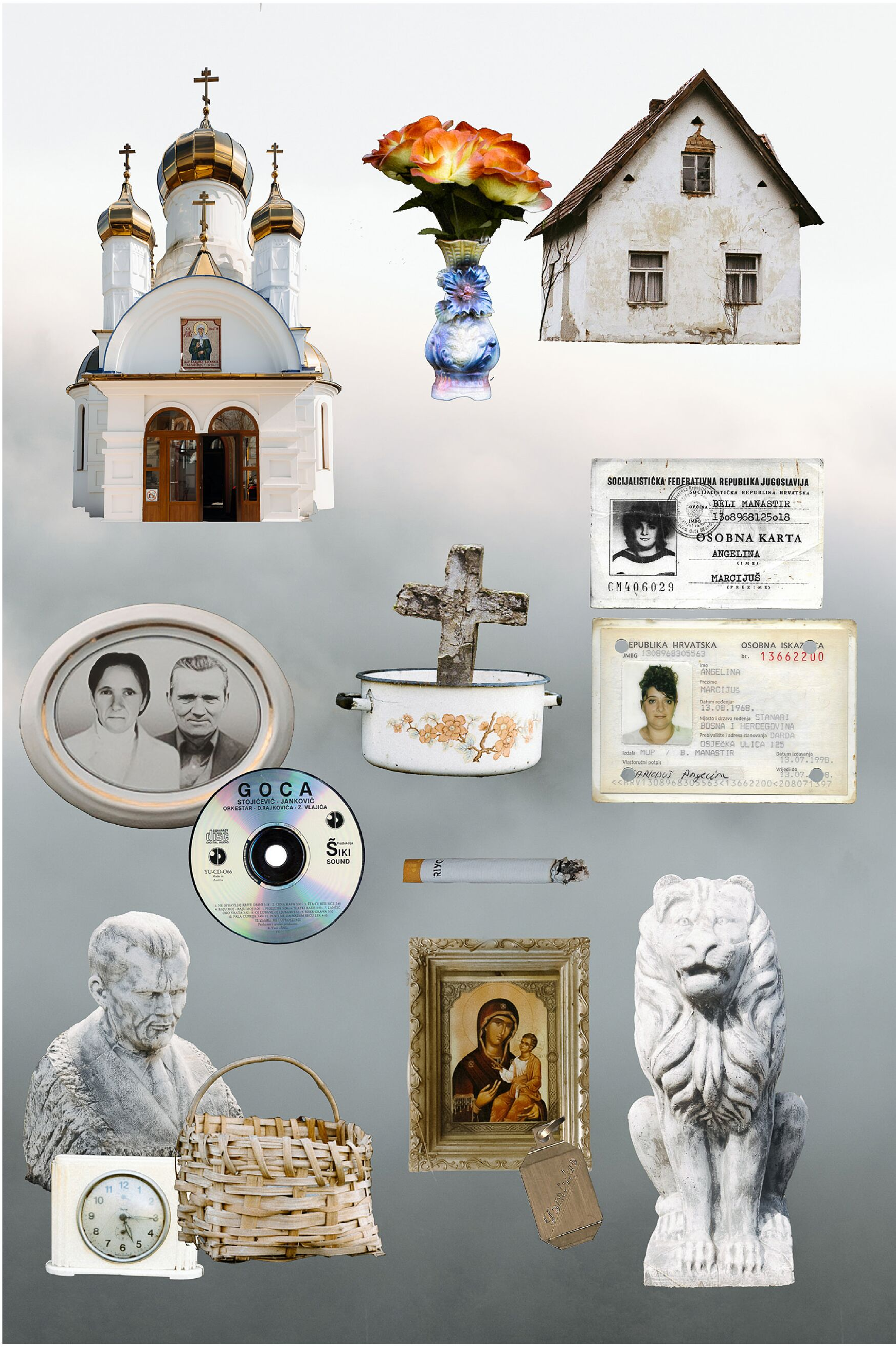
© Tomislav Marcijuš | Our embrace will be long, like the waiting

Our embrace will be long, like the waiting

Tomislav Marcijuš

This project explores memory, migration, and the fragile notion of home through the journey of Tomislav Marcijuš's mother between Baranja and Bosnia. Blending archival material and photography, it traces generational loss and belonging. Fragmented like memory itself, the work becomes both personal and universal—a quiet tribute to lives shaped by movement and longing.

“This project is a profound exploration of memory, loss, and the evolving concept of home. Through photography, I trace my mother’s movements between Baranja, where she raised me, and her native village in Bosnia—a tranquil space frozen in time, yet rich with history. What began as a way to document her daily rituals soon transformed into a layered investigation of family, migration, and the invisible burdens carried across generations. Using a mix of archival materials, still photographs, and visual fragments from our shared and inherited pasts, I strive to construct a narrative that defies linearity. Instead, it flows like memory itself—fragmented, emotional, and intimate. This work is not merely about her, or even about us, but about many who inhabit in-between places, whose identities are shaped by departure, return, and the yearning for something just out of reach. I am interested in how photography can serve both as evidence and as myth; how it preserves while also distorting. I perceive the camera as a tool for both witnessing and healing. This project provided me with a space to grieve, to remember, and ultimately to reconnect. As I near fifteen years of working with photography, this body of work feels like a return to something essential—an embrace between the personal and the intimate. It is, above all, a love letter to my mother and to all the quiet lives that carry entire worlds within them.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All images © Tomislav Marcijuš | Our embrace will be long, like the waiting

All images © Tomislav Marcijuš | Our embrace will be long, like the waiting

About
Tomislav Marcijuš is a Croatian photographer with fifteen years of experience in documentary, contemporary, and travel photography. His work explores themes of memory, identity, migration, and belonging, often drawing from personal and collective archives. He is known for a cinematic, emotionally driven visual style that strongly emphasises atmosphere and storytelling. Based in Croatia, he travels across Europe for commissioned work and personal projects. He balances commercial assignments with long-term artistic explorations, including a recent project about my mother's journey between Baranja and Bosnia. Through photography, he aims to create intimate, timeless images that resonate with universal human experiences.

www.marcijustomislav.com

© Cristian Barnett | Olena and Evengelina

The Displaced

Cristian Barnett

Food photographer Cristian Barnett was profoundly shocked by the sudden invasion of Russia into Ukraine, prompting him to create a series about displaced Ukrainians who are now residing in Germany and Poland. He sought another outlet for his photography; this personal project, entirely different from his commercial work, motivated him to persevere. “I’m in Estonia for the start of a new long-term project about the border between Russia and NATO.”

© Cristian Barnettl | Evgenia

© Cristian Barnettl | Olena

On the day Russia invaded Ukraine, Cristian Barnett was surprised by how shocked and upset he felt. “I vividly remember driving to work that week and listening to the horrendous interviews on the radio, and in the evening watching the images of Ukrainian refugees fleeing the country.” It became clear that this was a significant historical event, and he contemplated documenting some of the many tragic stories from those affected. Once the war commenced, Barnett discovered that several of his Instagram followers were Ukrainian, and he learned their stories.

Germany was absorbing a vast number of refugees, so it seemed to Barnett the most prominent place to visit, besides the fact that he already had a contact there. “I hadn't intended to take pictures in Poland as I had planned to photograph internal refugees in Lviv, in western Ukraine, but a week before the trip, the Kremenchuk shopping mall attack occurred, killing 20 people. Although a long way from Lviv, this brazen attack on civilians resulted in pressure from my friends and family not to go to Ukraine, so I decided to shoot in Poland instead, which, along with Germany, has taken in the largest number of refugees.”

© Cristian Barnettl | Anastasia Umanchyk

© Cristian Barnett | Svetlana, Ernest and Artur

Call for humanity

For the images taken in Germany, Barnett collaborated with a friend residing in Hannover. He also reached out to some of his friends and agencies that focus on refugees. In Poland, he contacted a food photographer who was from Ukraine. “She was not only able to help find other Ukrainians but became part of the project herself.”

He looked for representative stories – mothers and children, larger family groups, and occasionally men, who were often not allowed to leave Ukraine after the invasion.

His series, *The Displaced* is the result of meeting and photographing Ukrainian individuals in a quiet and patient manner. “I always take time to talk to people before I photograph them, and for a project such as this, it would be very strange not to.”

It is a fundamental call for humanity to support those who lack the security of their homes and families. “We all need and want basic things from life: safety, financial security, and loving friends and family,” says Cristian Barnett.

Impact

It is never predictable whether photographs have a substantial impact on an audience, as many people are inundated with thousands of images daily. Nevertheless, every change in people’s minds, no matter how small, contributes to a better understanding of our surroundings. “Regarding photography, some images always cut through our photo-saturated lives, but even then, the impact is probably fleeting. I think print is where photography still has some power to impact.”

Photography and text form an effective combination, enhancing the value of both modes of communication. Barnett didn’t limit himself to portraits; he also included informative text, leading to a deeper understanding of individual lives. Anastasia (37), a makeup artist from Mykolaiv, fled with her son and three cats: “On 24th February, I was awoken at 4:30 am by the sound of bombing. My son didn’t want to leave, but thankfully, we did as our home was damaged by bombing on the 25th.

> “We all need and want basic things from life: safety, financial security, and loving friends and family.

© Cristian Barnett | Yulia and Elina

© Cristian Barnett | Randy and Irena

© Cristian Barnettl | Masha Levkovskaya

© Cristian Barnettl | Mariia Bilenka

On March 10, we took a crowded bus to Poland and waited almost two days to cross the border." She finally arrived in Hannover, Germany. Cristian Barnett explains the added value of words: "In this case, I felt that images alone were inadequate, and if they somehow survive into the future, they will become a tiny part of the overall narrative of the war in Ukraine. I don't usually 'interview' people, but the stories were too important not to record, so I also created a list of questions for people to answer. Each story is uniquely heartbreaking and tragic. It's all so futile."

Depth of field

The portraits possess a solemn dignity, forged through a focused session that one only gets with large format cameras and shallow depth of field, strongly emphasising the sitters and capturing their emotion. "The shallow depth of field is achieved with the Fuji GFX 80mm 1.7 lens, which does give an almost large format feel. I like this look as it has a timeless quality and creates a focus vignette which intensifies the person in the shot."

About

Cristian Barnett is a professional photographer with an eye for the beautiful, specialising in food and drink, interiors, and people. He has been a professional photographer for over 20 years. However, his interest in photography began long before that, with a Kodak Ektra 150 in his early teens. He then progressed to developing films in the bathroom at home.

www.cristianbarnett.com

© Cristian Barnettl | Varvara and Yulia

“

> I always take time to talk to people before I photograph them, and for a project such as this, it would be very strange not to.

- Cristian Barnett

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Artdoc Gallery is an online gallery dedicated to conceptual, experimental, and mixed-media art photography—spanning visual storytelling and artistic documentary. We present the work of both established and emerging photographers from around the world. Discover a curated collection that brings photography beyond the frame.

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Proud Humans

Tigre Escobar

“In my interdisciplinary practice, I blend the techniques of fashion, art, and documentary photography to create vivid contemporary human stories. My latest project includes members of local and immigrant Latin Queer communities from around the world. This project explores how the art of drag emphasises endless possibilities for self-creation and empowerment of identity.

To do this, my compositions often take intimate scenarios and disrupt them. For example, in my series *Proud Humans*, I photograph artists who use drag to create extraordinarily imaginative alter egos, from Aliens to Monsters to Dolls, in the intimate spaces of their everyday lives, merging the quotidian with futuristic narratives by spotlighting these alter egos. This project specifically reimagines concepts surrounding identity, beauty, and the ever-elusive self in defiance of gender binaries, especially in the Latin American context.

I consider storytelling my primary artistic medium. I interweave narrative and contemporary portraiture to redefine and demystify outdated definitions of the Queer community and its origins. By utilising a palette of eloquent visuals that depict personal spaces and incredible alter egos, my work reveals the vibrancy that emerges from the spaces between dualities.

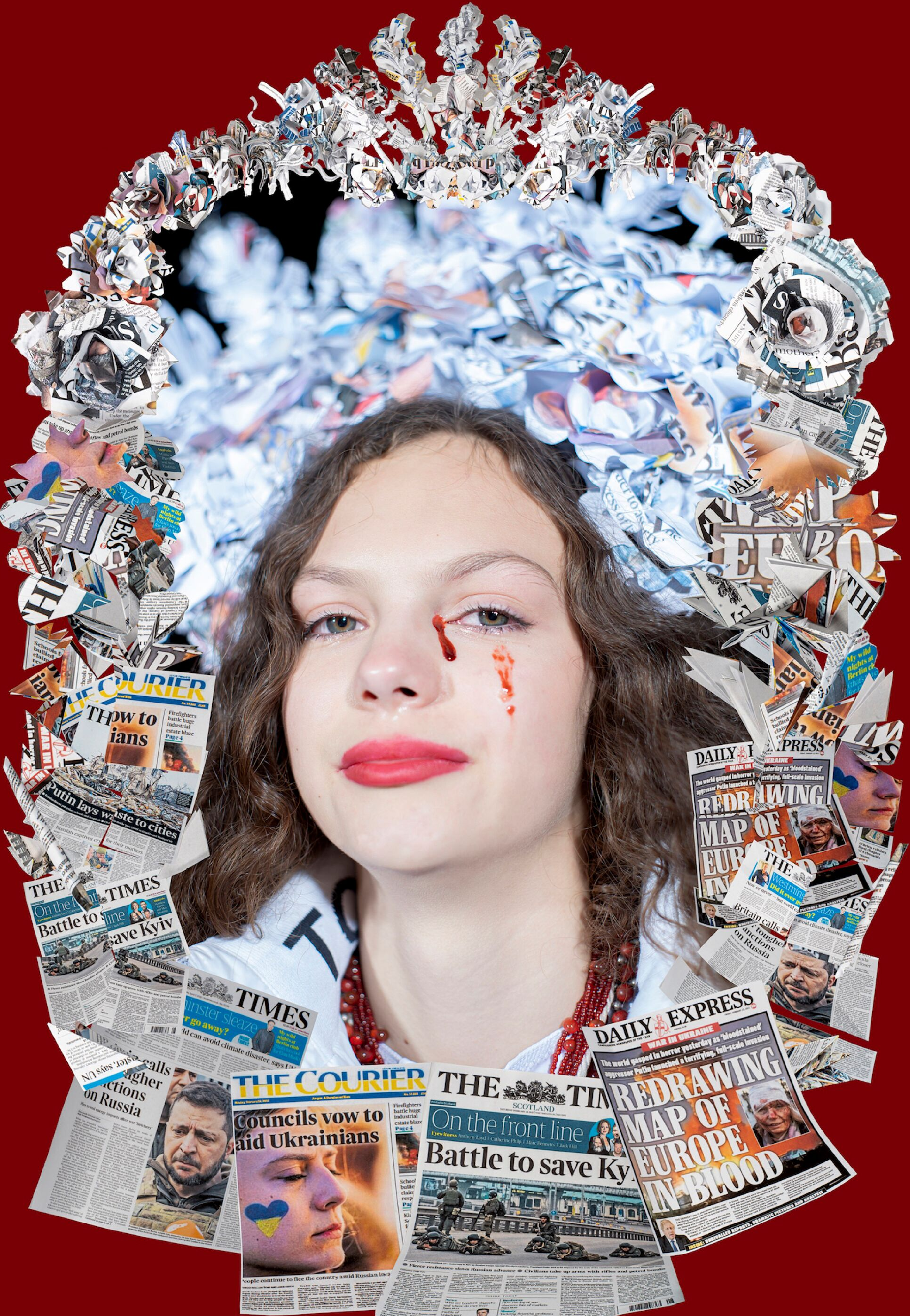
© Tigre Escobar | Proud Humans

All Images © Tigre Escobar | Proud Humans

About

Tigre Escobar is a Latin photographer whose work fuses fashion, art, and documentary styles to depict vivid portraits and short films, highlighting the Latin Queer community. Based between New York and Mexico City, he studied art history at Saint Martin's in London and earned degrees in Photography and Fine Arts from the University of Miami. His solo exhibitions include Galería ONE in Havana and Galería La Cometa in Bogotá (2022), as well as The Art of Nobody at Zona Maco 2025. He has received awards from ND Awards, Life Framer's "Humans" contest, and was a finalist at Berlin Fashion Festival 2025.

www.tigre-escobar.com

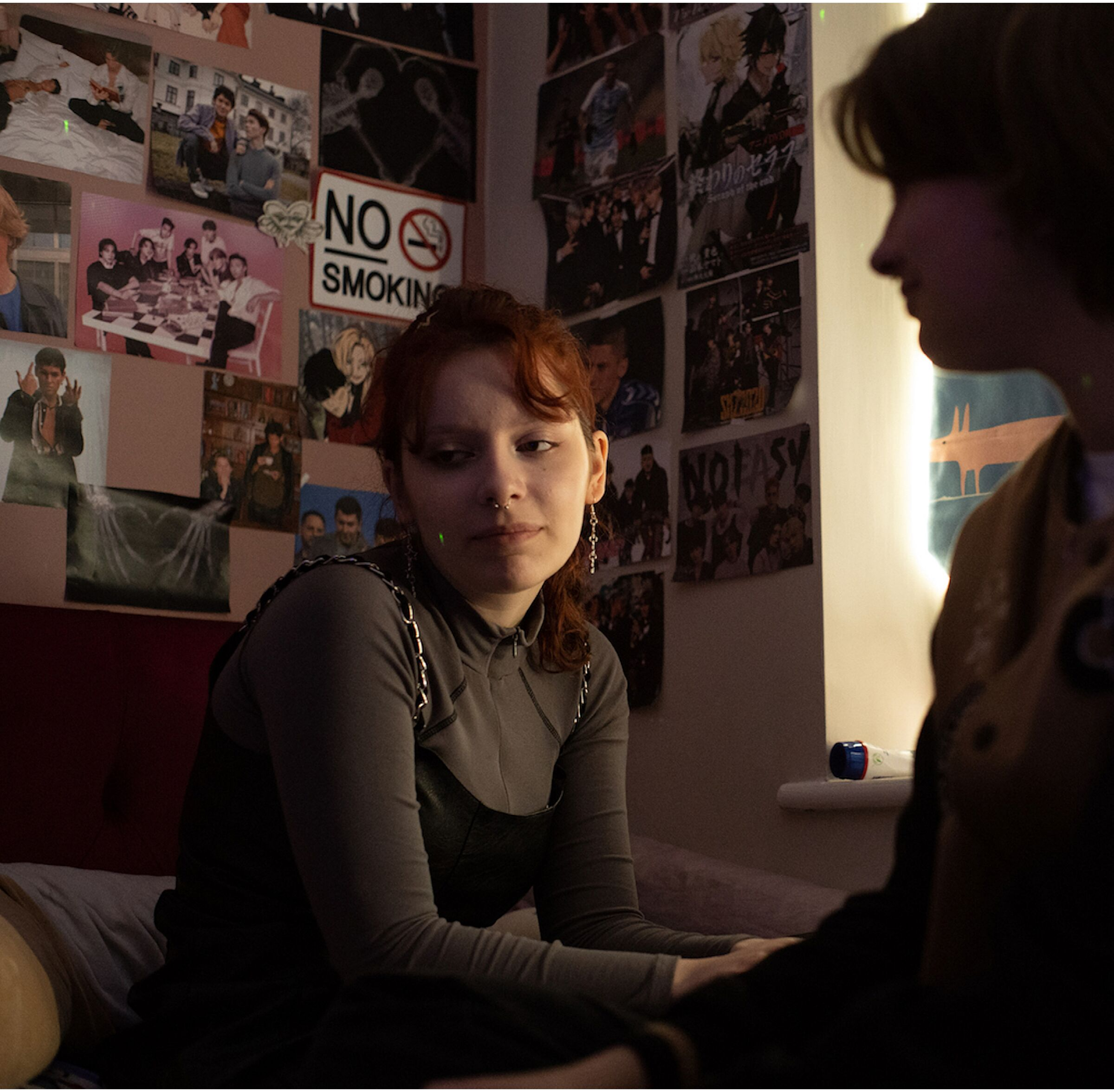

THE COURIER
Councils vow to aid Ukrainians
People continue to flee the country amid Russian inva
THE TIMES
SCOTLAND
On the front line
Battle to save Ky
Fierce resistance slows Russian advance ● Civilians take up arms with rifles and petrol bombs
DAILY EXPRESS
WAR IN UKRAINE
REDRAWING MAP OF EUROPE IN BLOOD
Putin lays waste to cities
Britain calls for tougher sanctions on Russia
Firefighters battle huge industrial estate blaze

© Anemona Knut | Out of my hands

Out Of My Hands

Anemona Knut

Out of My Hands is a documentary project portraying teenage Ukrainian refugees rebuilding their lives in the UK. Beneath their everyday routines lies a silent weight of trauma and loss. Blending reportage and portraiture, the work reveals their resilience while challenging superficial impressions through collaborative storytelling and emotionally layered narratives imagery.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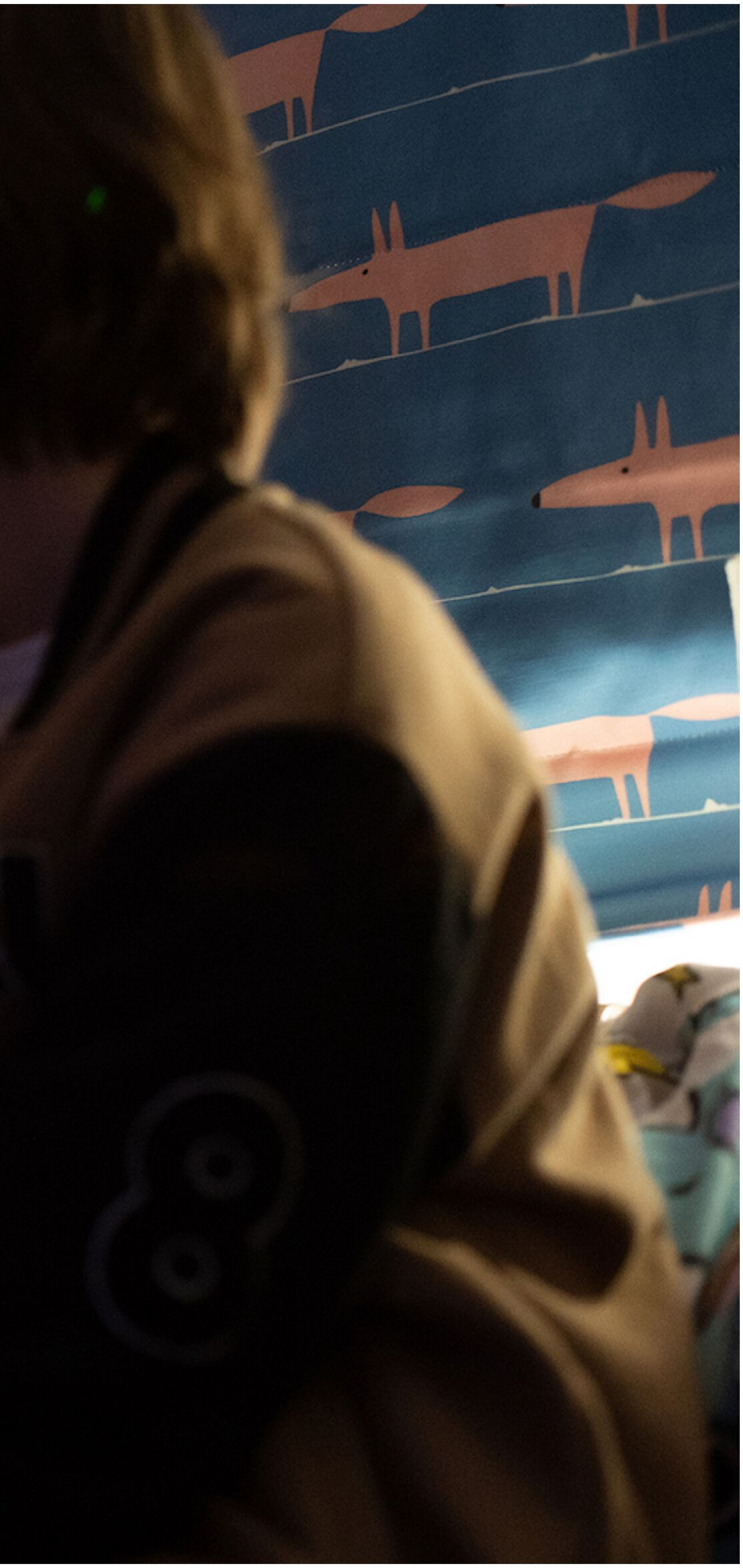
SMOKING
終わりのセラフ
NO EASY

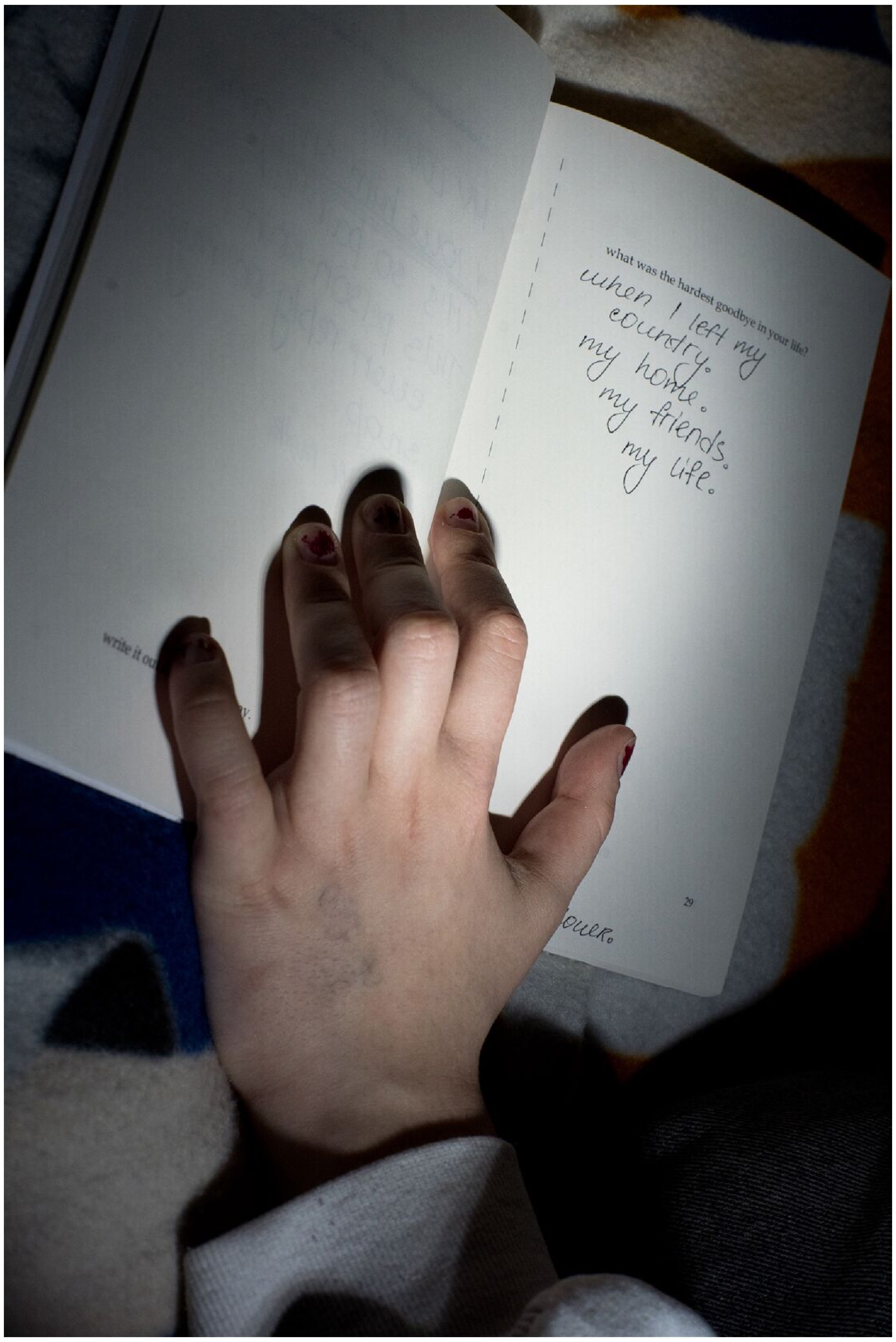
© Anemona Knut | Out of my hands



“*Out of My Hands* is a long-term documentary project exploring the lives of teenage girls who fled the war in Ukraine and are now rebuilding their futures in the UK. At first glance, they appear to be like any other teenagers—laughing, studying, making plans—but beneath the surface, they bear the burden of displacement, loss, and uncertainty.

This project began with my personal experience of hosting a young Ukrainian refugee. Witnessing her struggle, which resulted in a mental breakdown requiring hospitalisation, made me realise how little we truly perceive beyond first impressions. Inspired by this, I began photographing Karina, Evelina, and Marina in April 2023—documenting their daily lives, relationships, and quiet moments of resilience.

I work with both reportage and conceptual portraiture, often using film to create a timeless, intimate perspective. The images blend staged and candid elements, reflecting the tension between how these young women present themselves and the deeper emotional realities they hold within. This project is not merely documentation but also a collaboration. The girls play an active role in shaping their narrative, directing some of the images and contributing their own archival photos. Together, we construct a story that challenges assumptions, revealing what is often concealed. *Out of My Hands* invites the viewer to look deeper, to recognise the silent echoes of trauma, and to foster a greater sense of empathy and understanding for those compelled to start afresh.


what was the hardest goodbye in your life?
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my friends.
my life.
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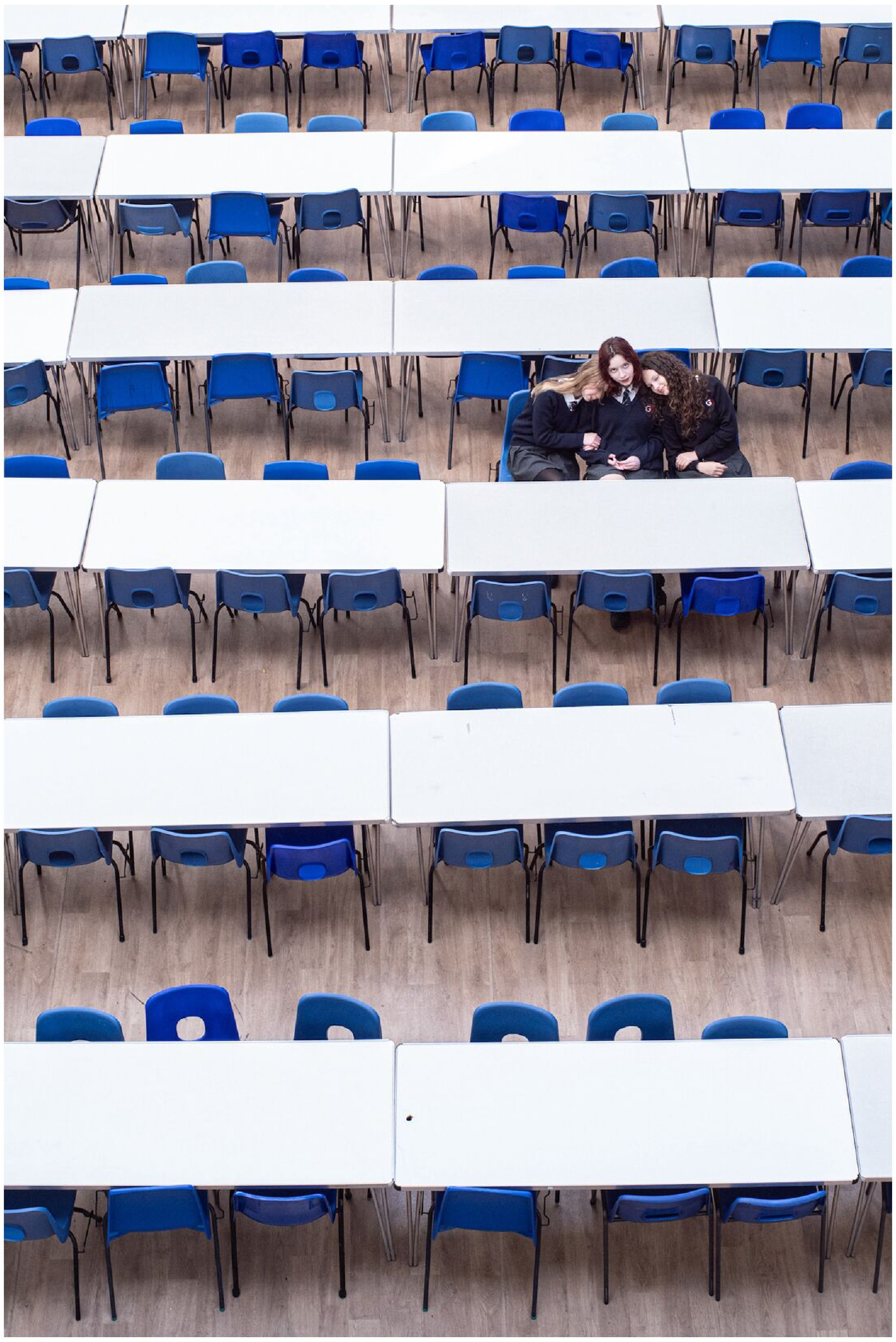


All Images © Anemona Knut | Out of my hands

About

Anemona Knut was born in communist Poland to free-spirited artists, introduced to photography by her father and his old Praktica. She earned an MA in Communication and Journalism from the University of Warsaw and has published in major Polish outlets such as Newsweek and Gazeta Wyborcza. After moving to London in 2008, she developed expertise in business management. During the lockdown, she returned to documentary photography, focusing on human relationships and resilience. She works with digital and analogue photography, blending reportage with conceptual portraiture. In 2023, she began her studies at the Institute of Creative Photography in Opava.

www.anemonkey.com

© Sakir Khader

The humanity of a dehumanised people

Sakir Khader

As a child, Dutch-Palestinian photographer and filmmaker Sakir Khader would visit the West Bank every summer to see his family. When he was 11, he often played with his similarly aged cousin Kosay. After young Sakir returned safely to the Netherlands, he learned that his cousin had been shot dead by the Israeli army for no apparent reason. This tragic event, symptomatic of Palestinian life since the founding of the state of Israel, referred to by Palestinians as the Nakba (the catastrophe), motivated Khader to become a photographer. He wanted to capture the unimaginable suffering and difficult lives of Palestinians in the many enclaves in the West Bank, where ethnic violence is an everyday reality.

Despite the dire circumstances faced by the inhabitants of Jenin, a Palestinian town in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where Sakir Khader took numerous photographs, we also witness everyday scenes from life. Two cheerful girls in traditional costumes, a man on a motorbike, a young man at the gym, an older man smoking on his bed, a barber working outdoors, and a child sitting on a sheep. These images convey the atmosphere of a relaxing summer day. However, at the same time, some pictures unveil a stark reality: the Israeli army's ongoing siege, humiliation, and intimidation. You see the dead and wounded, where life and happiness once thrived. Kader explains his position as a photographer: "I never chase the news. I like to capture everyday life. I don't photograph events where forty other photographers are chasing images. Then you become part of a database from which the media have forty other choices. One hundred deaths in Gaza are just statistics. But I have been photographing all my life in specific neighbourhoods and cities where I know everyone by name. I can picture those people in their most vulnerable positions and intimate moments. They are the same individuals who later perish in bombings. They will always be remembered through my photographs as people who lived and loved, rather than just numbers in an archive, without knowing their faces. This is how I humanise the people in the photos. I don't need to convince anyone that they are people I photograph, but they represent my country and my people. These people were always represented by Western media in a certain way."

Humanity

Humanity is not merely a general concept about people on Earth. It is also an ethical notion that describes how humanity constitutes a network of individuals who support each other with love and compassion, grounded in justice and upheld by human rights. The whole world now knows that this is not the case in Gaza, where a genocide is taking place. In the West Bank, the situation is not as severe yet, but it is progressing in that same direction. This is what visual storyteller Sakir Khader is concerned about daily. He wrote on his social channels about the commemoration of World War Two: "So much has already been written, so much said, and yet it all seems only to deepen the ache.

> “ I don't need to convince anyone that they are people I photograph, but they represent my country and my people.

All Images © Sakir Khader

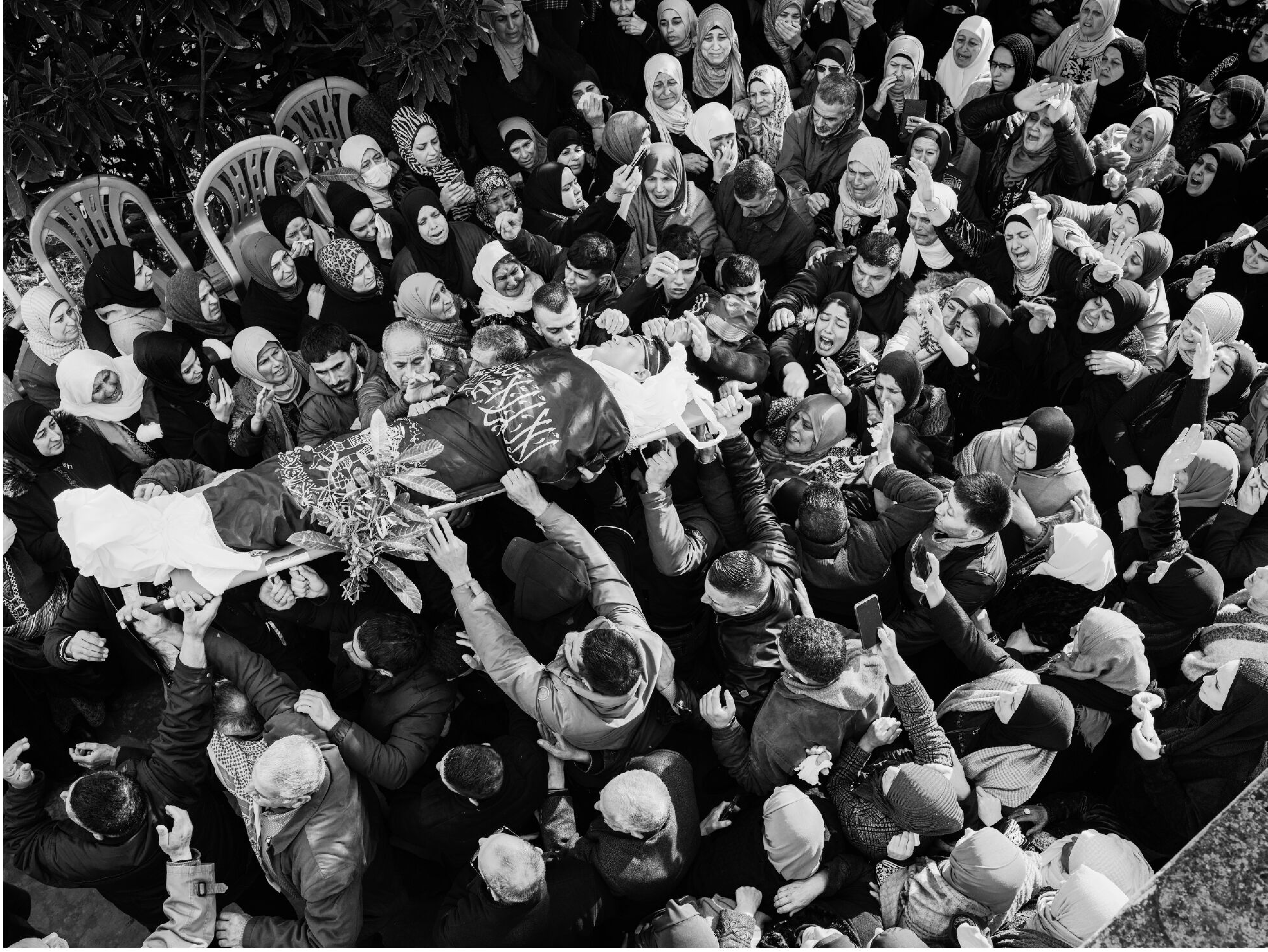
All Images © Sakir Khader

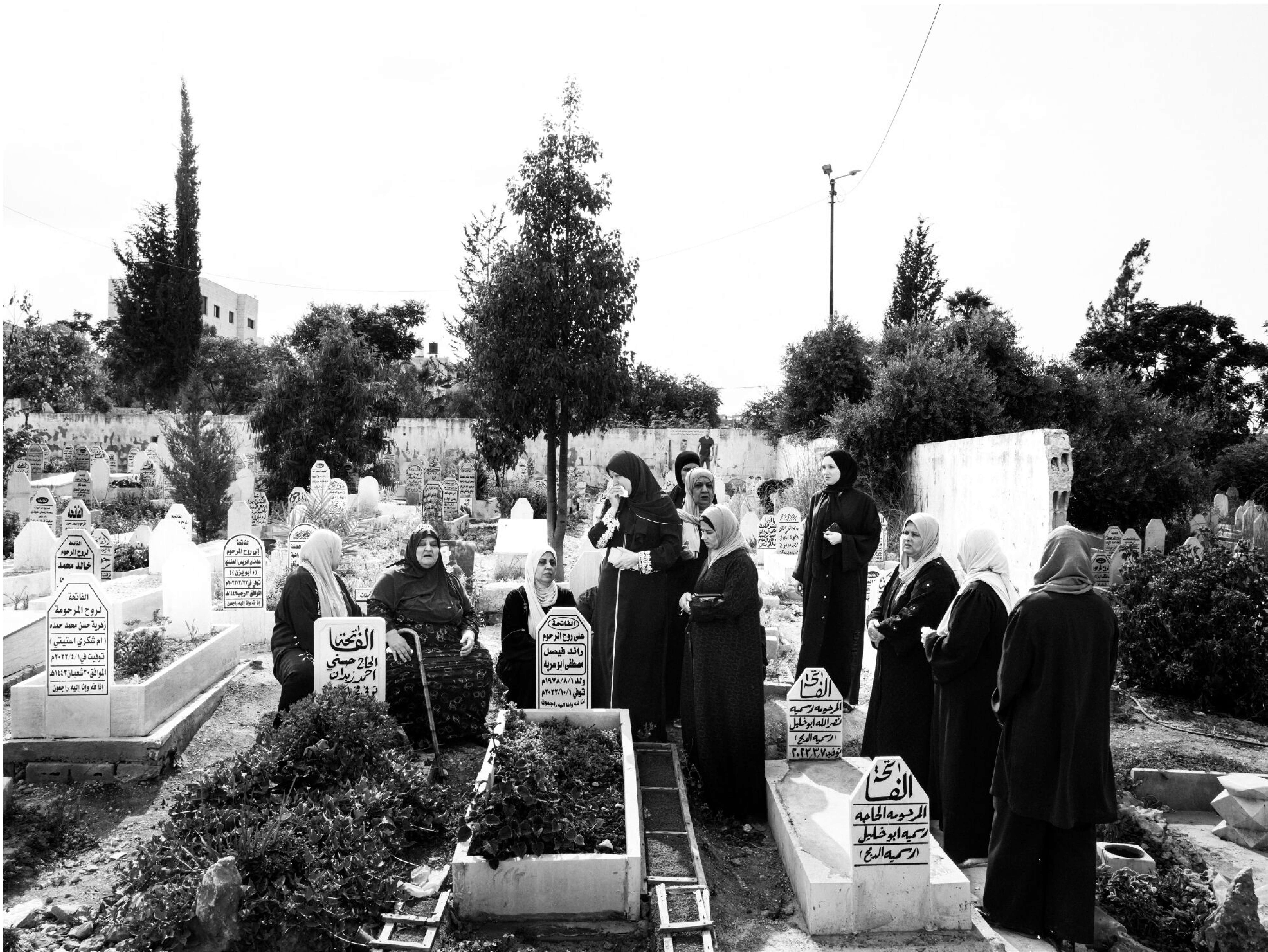
Because no matter how loud we cry out, no matter how clearly we write, the suffering of those we love in the homeland continues unabated. Not that I ever believed words alone could stop butchers at their work. But this time—this sustained and deliberate cruelty—has made something unmistakably clear: the world we once 'believed' in no longer exists. And when I say, "the world," I don't mean the ones who are awake—those who witness and resist. I mean the systems: the states, the institutions, the sleepwalkers so drunk on delusion they mistake silence for neutrality and power for justice. The world has acclimated to the normalisation of mass killing, to Israel's unchecked aggression. In Gaza, it is not history. It is now. Every minute, another family. Another child. Another father. Another mother. Another home. Another neighbourhood. Again. And again. Starvation. Displacement. Bombardment. And over it all, the quiet arrogance of a world still convinced of its own moral superiority. The silence. The rhetorical acrobatics. The pious statements. The lies. "Never again" was never meant for us."

When we speak to him about his writing, he explains in his extremely calm voice that when he can't photograph, he starts writing to express his anger and sadness about his homeland, Palestine. "What I want to tell, I photograph on location, but when I can't photograph, I write. I worked as a writing journalist for many years. In my forthcoming book, I will add much written text because words and images complement each other very well."

Mothers and sons

In spring 2025, at the Amsterdam photography museum Foam, Sakir Khader held an exhibition titled *Yawm al-Firak*, Arabic for *Day of Farewell*, which recounted the tragic deaths of nine Palestinian boys and the responses of their mothers. In this narrative, Khader drew upon the literary Arabic tradition, linking it to personal stories. Portraits of the sons adorned the exhibition while portraits of their mothers faced them on the opposite wall, many of whom lived in the (now demolished) refugee camp in Jenin.





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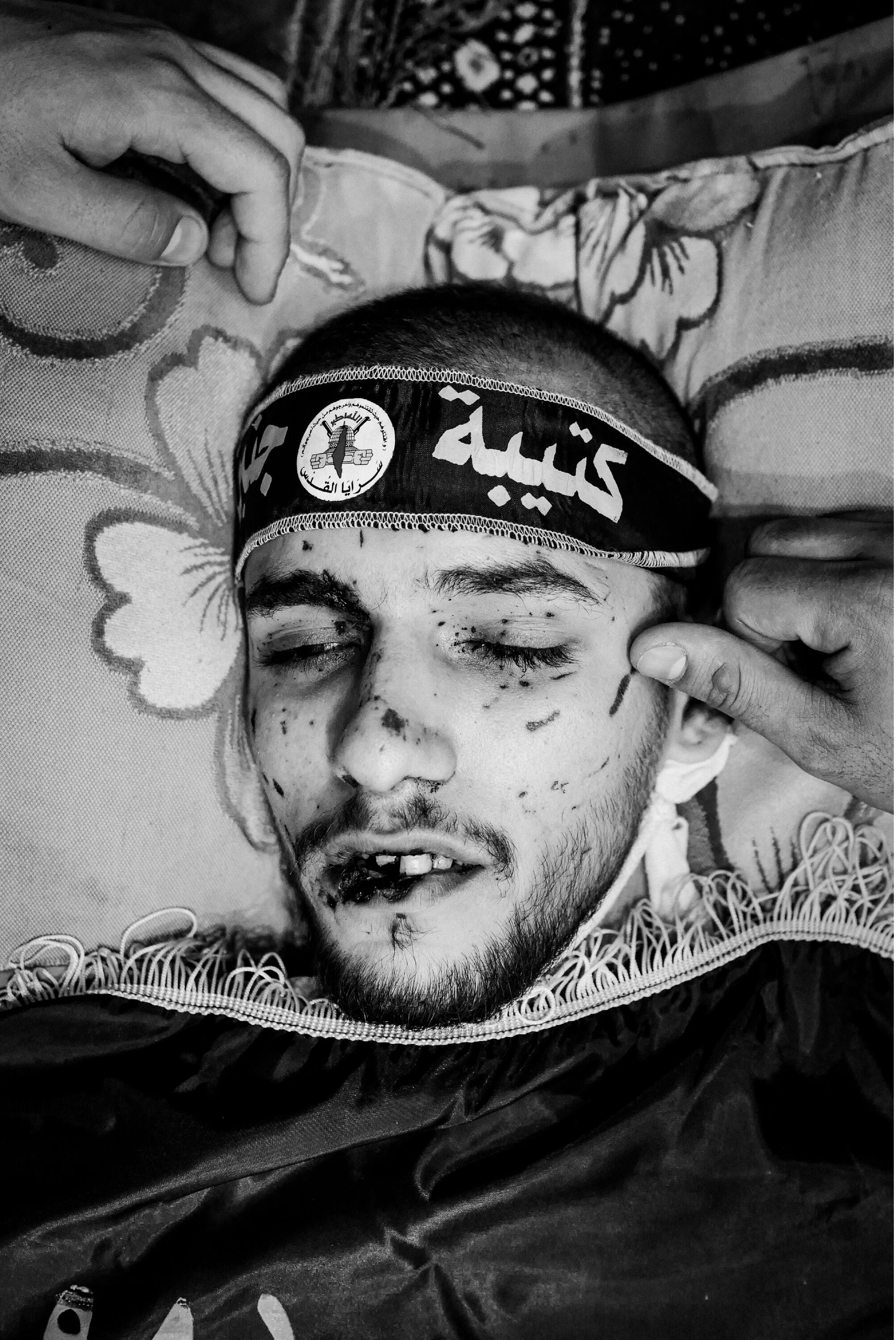
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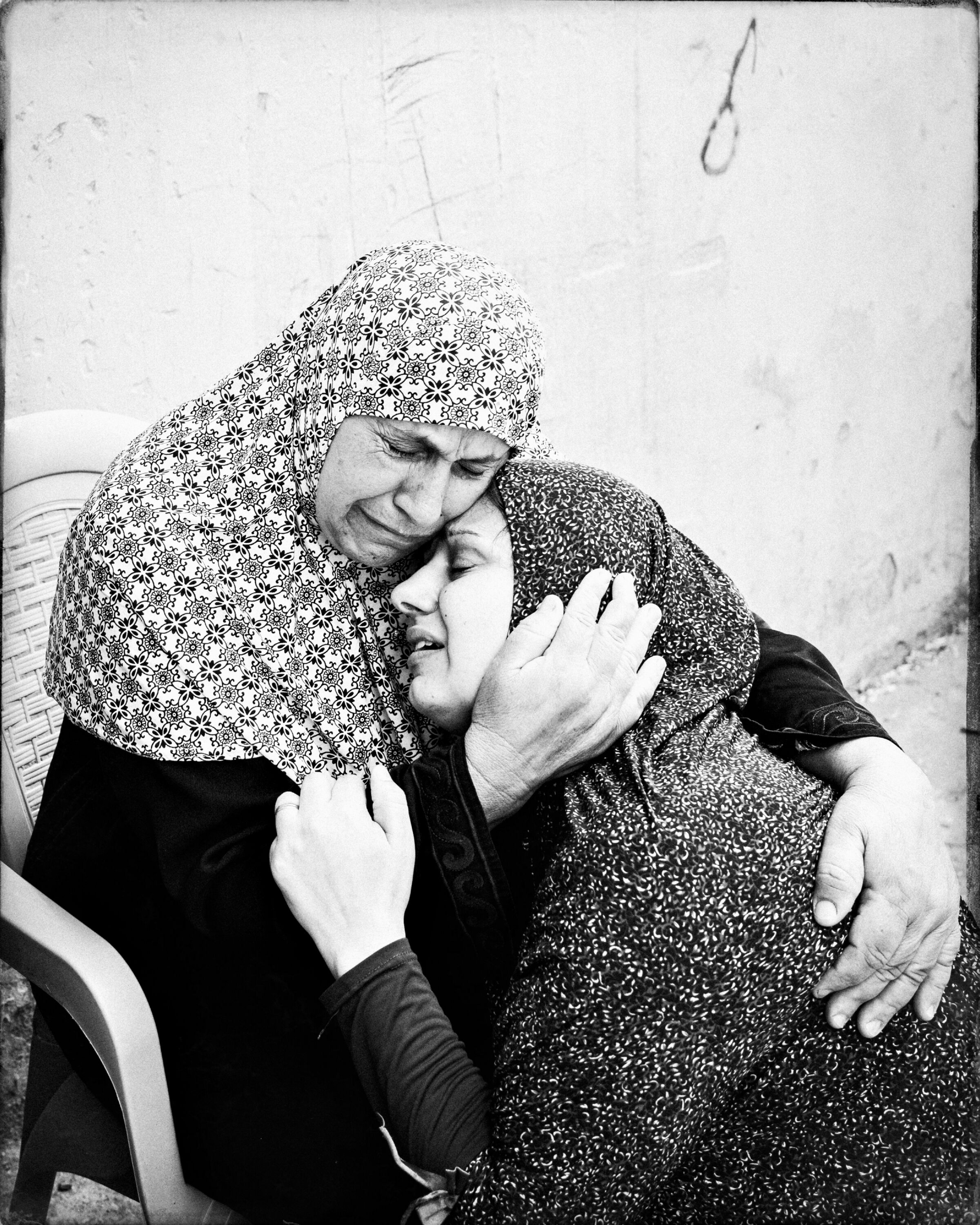

Khader has been documenting daily life intertwined with death for years, where ‘goodbye’ is the common thread. “They are people who sacrifice for freedom. We call such a person a martyr, but internationally, that is seen as glorifying death, while for us, it has the meaning of witnessing suffering. I show who these young men are and the love of mothers for their sons.” The viewer is not spared: the images of the deceased are shocking to witness. However, according to him, this is the harsh reality of everyday life.

Subjective stories

It is often said that photojournalism should adhere to the code of objectivity as part of journalistic writing, examining the situation from both sides. However, in today’s photographic practice, this perspective seems outdated. Presently, documentary photography serves as a more subjective form of storytelling, as only in this manner can the complexities of humanity be depicted. During a notable television broadcast in the Netherlands, Khader was asked why he did not include the other side of the story, to which he replied with restraint that, with his beard and dark complexion, he would be immediately shot in the head if he travelled to an Israeli settlement. “I am a subjective storyteller, an ethical photographer, who photographs with empathy for his subject. The Western media have demonised and dehumanised my people. When I capture people on camera, it is important that their eyes make contact with my eyes. I need to know that people are comfortable with my presence and how I capture them. The camera is a permanent part of me; people know me in the Palestinian territories. Sometimes I leave the camera in the bag and wait for the right moments.’

75019 PARIS,FR
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All Images © Sakir Khader

LIVING OUTSIDE
YOUR COMFORT ZONE
have stories to tell not stuff to show

All Images © Sakir Khader

Like birds in a cage

A poignant photograph features an eight-year-old girl amid the rubble of a bombed-out house, dressed in a jumper adorned with the word 'heart' in ornate letters. She has lowered her eyes and gazes thoughtfully at the ground, contemplating what her life may look like in the future. Khader refers to her as an angel, but this angel confided in him that she wanted to die. It embodies the inhumane situation faced by Palestinians. Sakir Khader: "Jewish settlements have been built in the West Bank since the Nakba in 1948. Every time, Israel talks about a so-called two-state solution. But what should we accept if, in that possible second state, the lives of Palestinians are rendered completely impossible? All the territory is occupied and controlled by settlers. The residents of the West Bank are prisoners in their own land. They live like birds in a cage. Palestinians cannot fly anywhere. Gaza is hermetically sealed, and in the West Bank, there are many little Gazas, closed enclaves where you are checked if you wish to enter or exit. The Israelis maintain an enemy in the face of the world and then rightfully fight it. They speak of the vengeful Arabs, but who made them vengeful? Through this framing, they dehumanise the Palestinians, and as a counterpart, I want to give them a human face."

Power of beauty

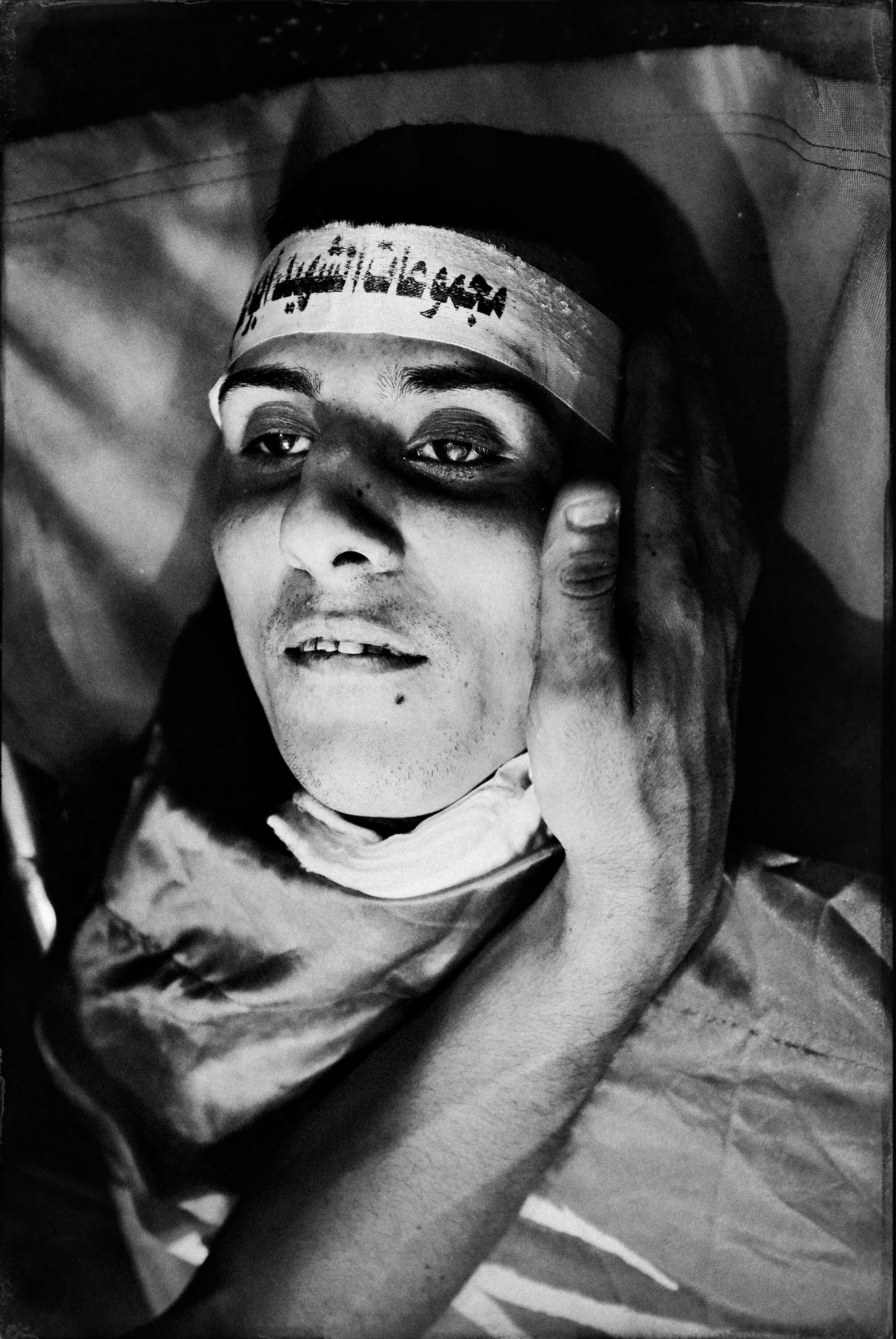
Khader's photographs are aesthetically beautiful, which creates a tension with the tragic subject matter. This is an enduring dilemma that haunts documentary photography. The recently deceased grand master of photography, Sebastião Salgado, was often criticised for inappropriate aesthetics in his photographs of human suffering. This misguided accusation of 'dramatic beauty' could be viewed as hypocritical, as if beauty should only be allocated to the carefree aspects of life. Khader: "There is strength and beauty in misery. We are not weak victims. I show people with pride. I don't photograph Palestinians the way people used to photograph the pathetic children with fat bellies in Africa. The beauty in my images is the metaphor for human strength. The region where I work is a paradise. The deep wounds in paradise are reflected in my work, sometimes literally in the photos, but also in people's eyes. My responsibility is not only to portray pathetic people, but also to show them as resilient and powerful. I show the raw reality, but therein lies the strength and beauty."

© Sakir Khader

About

Sakir Khader is a Palestinian documentary photographer and film director based in the Netherlands. His primary focus is the relationship between life and death in conflict zones, particularly throughout the Middle East. Renowned for his raw yet intimate cinematic signature style, Sakir consistently aims to illuminate the poetic sorrows of everyday life. He has published extensively in newspapers such as de Volkskrant, NRC, and Vice Media. He has received numerous accolades, including the Zilveren Camera. In 2025, he held an exhibition at Foam, attracting more than 50,000 visitors. Khader is a nominee for Magnum Photos.

www.sakirkhader.com


مجموعات الشهيد

“

They will always be remembered through my photographs as people who lived and loved, rather than just numbers in an archive, without knowing their faces.

- Sakir Khader

Echoes of Being

Highlights of Artdoc Exhibition

Echoes of Being is an online exhibition curated from the international open call *We Are Humanity*. In a time shaped by global tension and deep division, this collection brings together photographic works that reflect our shared human essence — quiet moments, gestures of care, acts of resistance, and the fragile dignity that connects us across cultures and experiences. The selected works span the personal and the political, the intimate and the universal. They reveal how humanity continues to resonate in daily life: through vulnerability, resilience, connection, and the simple act of being. In portraits, in absence, in everyday rituals — each image becomes an echo of what it means to live, witness, and remain human in uncertain times. *Echoes of Being* invites viewers to pause and consider: what traces do we leave in one another, and what do they reveal about who we are?

Visit the online exhibition here:

Echoes of Being

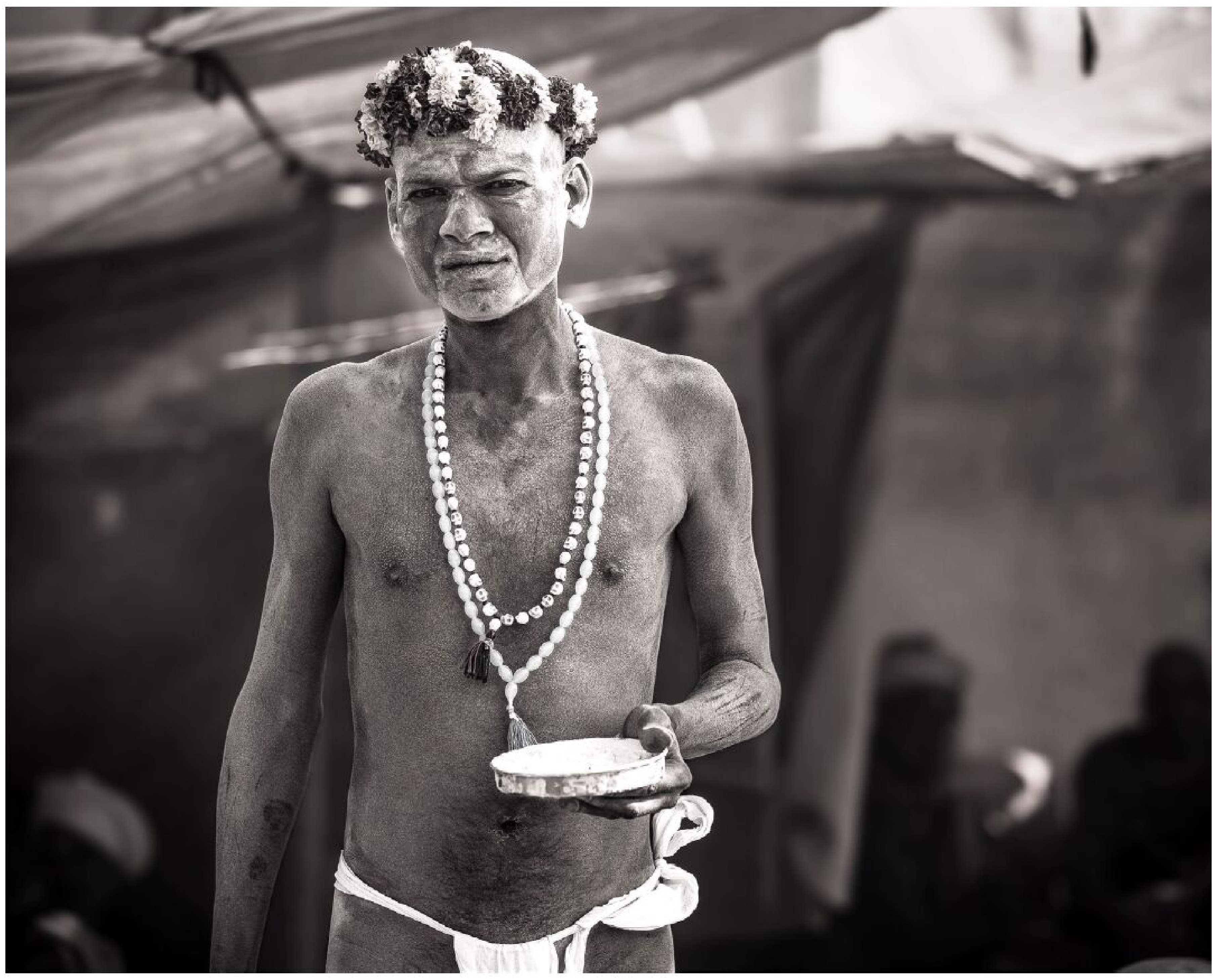
© Oscar Villeda I Tu Pueblo Saba

© Vivi Andreadou | Faces of Resilience

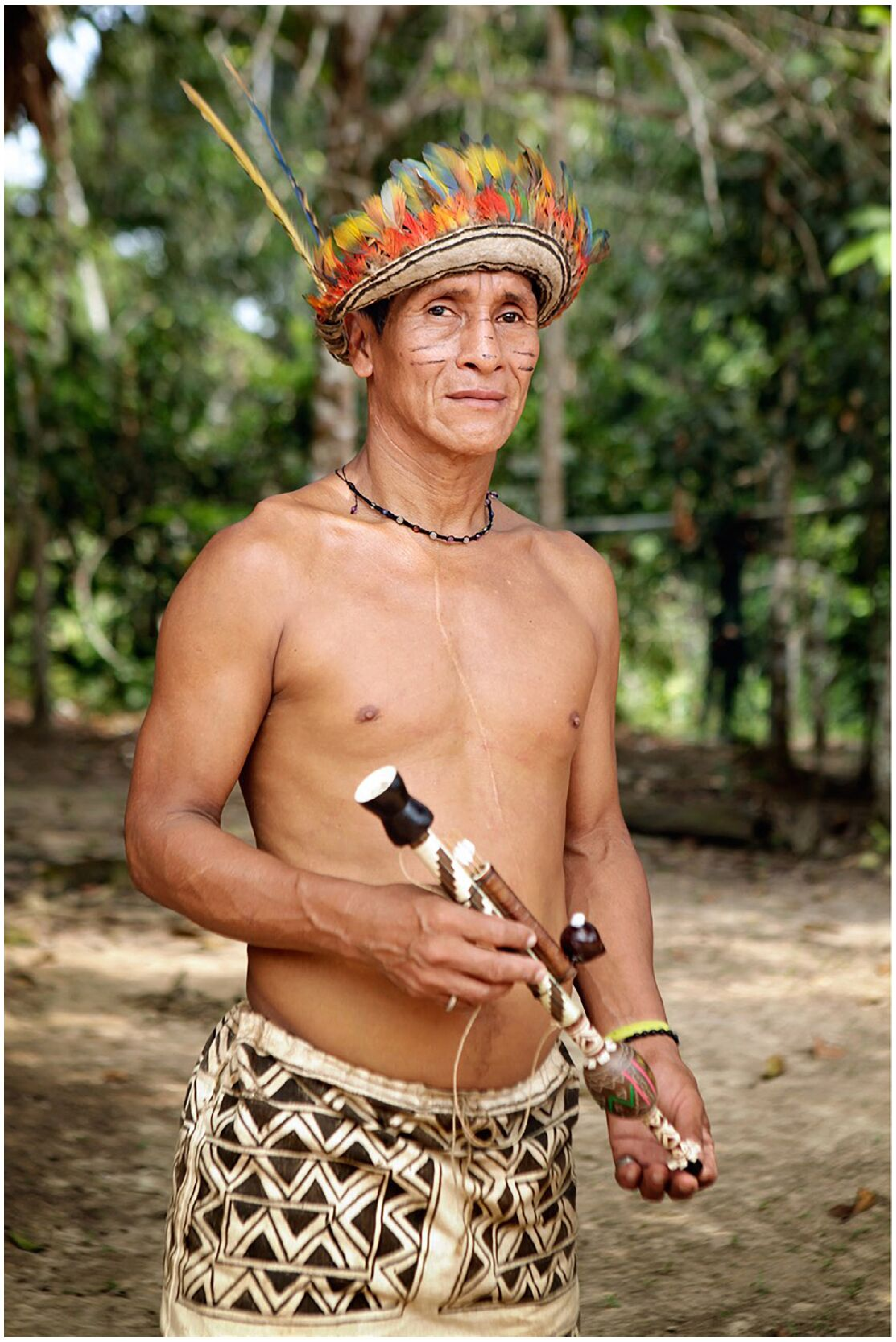
© Tracy Longley-Cook | Eating the Same Stone

© Madina Baymirzaeva | Tactile Memory

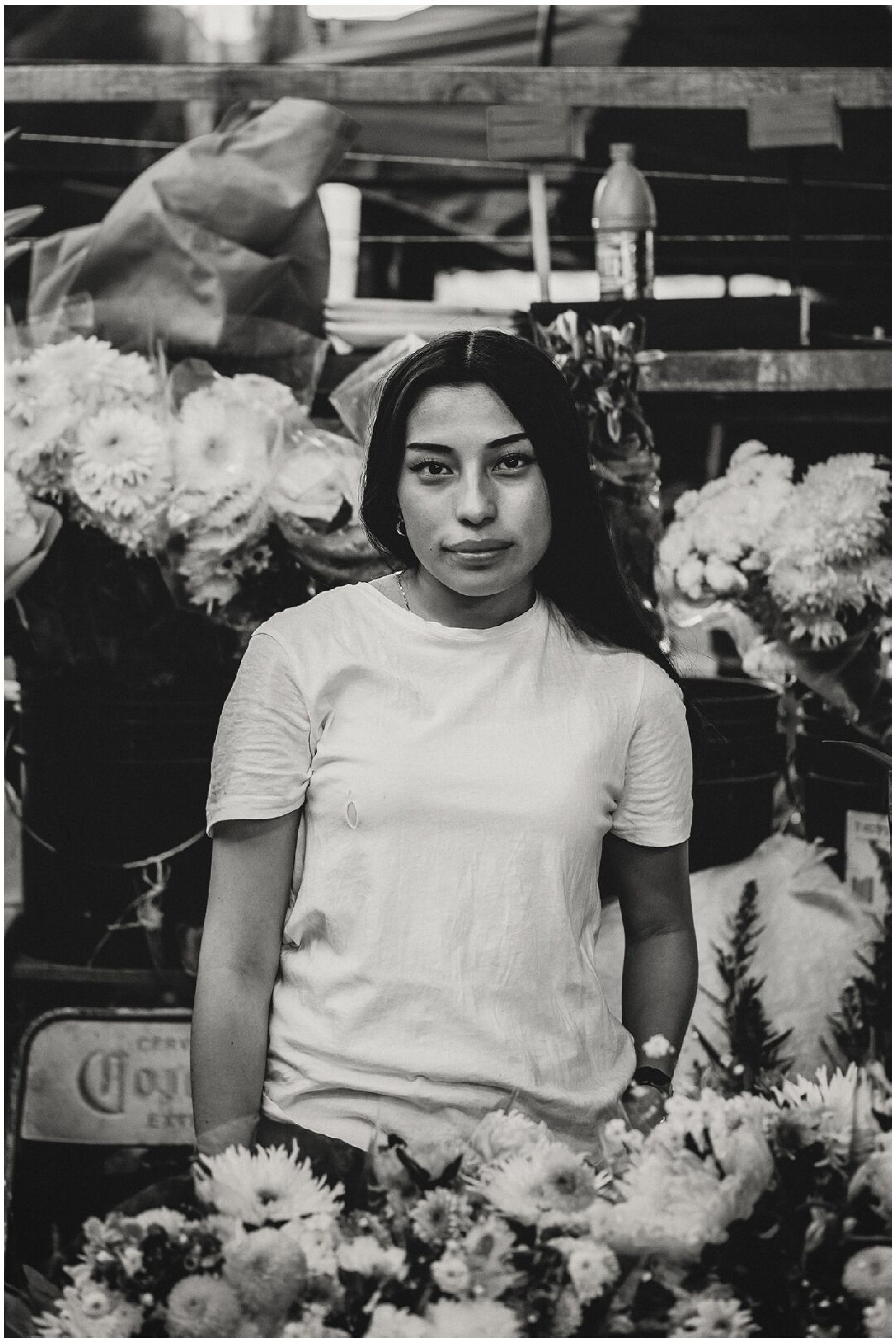
© Janet Milhomme | Sub-Saharan Graces



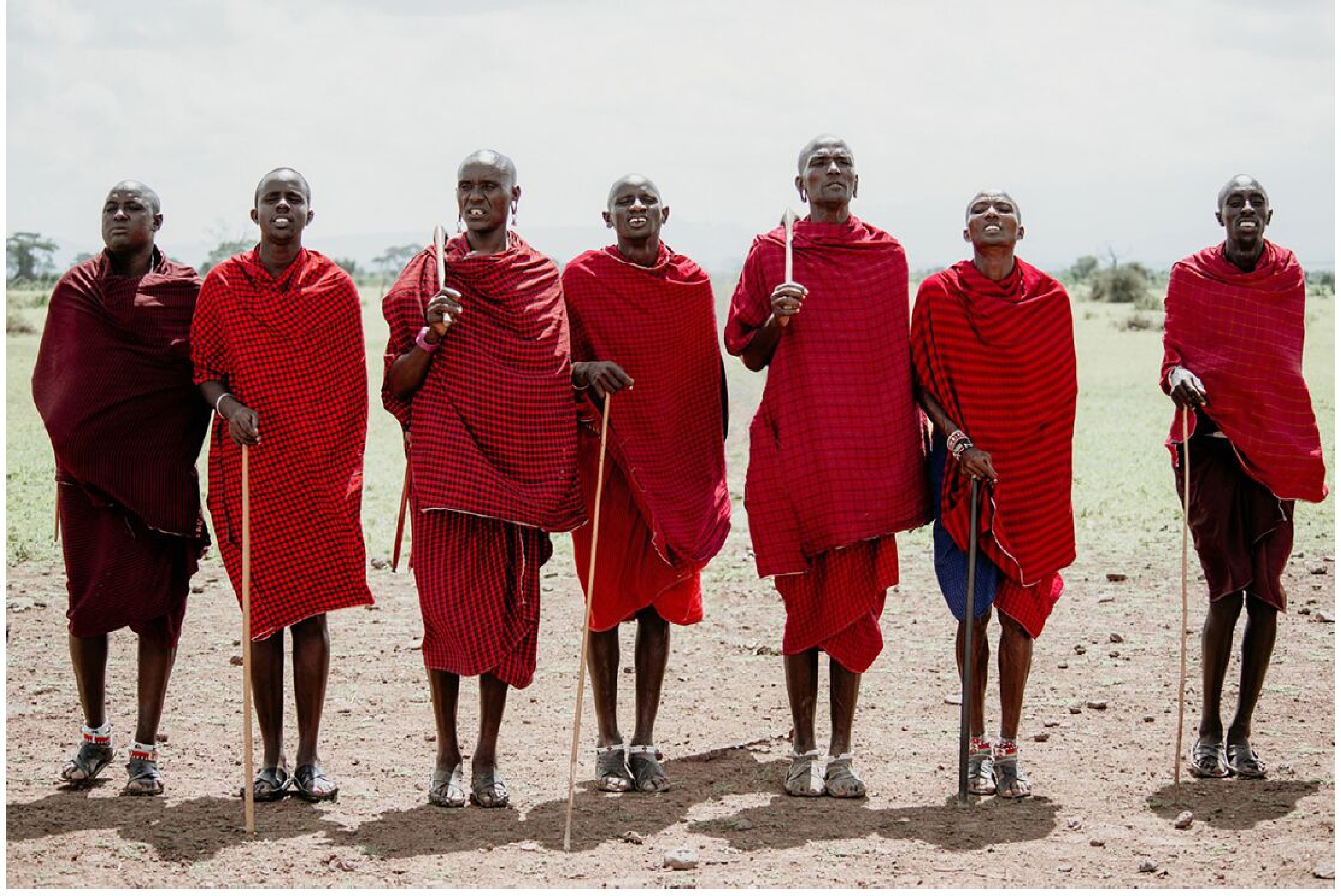
© Lela Edgar | Where We Gather



© Marta Stoyanova | Amazon descendants

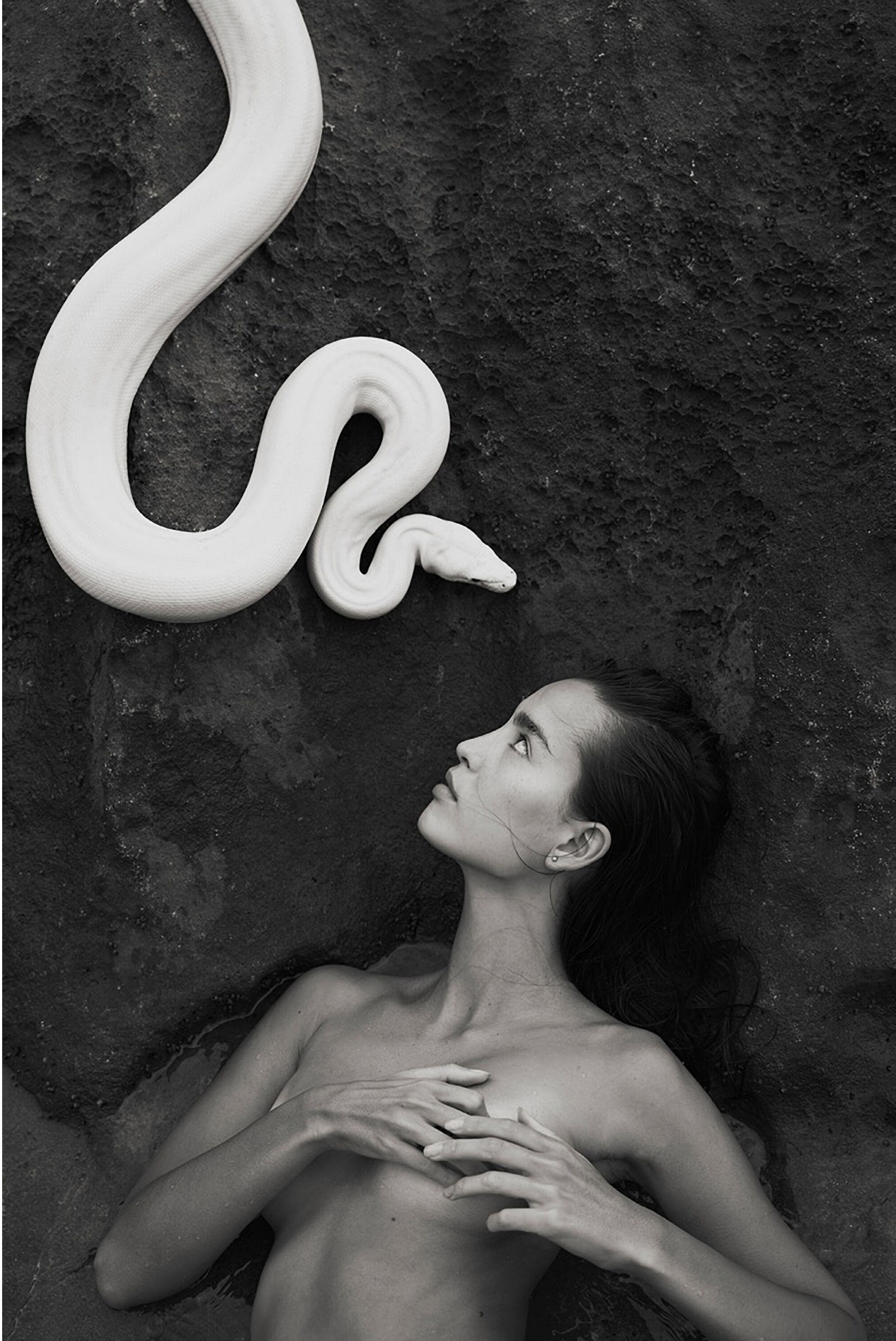


© Dan Ramaën | Me Llamo - Wendy



© Olenna Morozova | In the Face of Humanity

© Maureen Bond I Shaping Images of Self



© Natalie Karpushenko | Rebirth

Open Call
Global Connection

Exploring visual stories of human ties across cultures, communities and the natural world

In a world marked by differences and complexity, we invite photographers to explore what connects us across borders, cultures, and experiences. Global Connection calls for visual stories that reveal the threads of humanity that transcend boundaries — in gestures of care, resilience, belonging, identity, and shared presence.

We welcome submissions that range from documentary to conceptual, from poetic to political. Portraits, moments of daily life, visual metaphors of connection, or scenes of cultural exchange — all are invited, as long as they contribute to a broader reflection on the meaning and experience of global connection today.

SUBMIT YOUR WORK

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 11 AUGUST 2025

ARTDOC.PHOTO/SUBMIT

HII NI HARUSI YETU SOTE TUFU

GLOBAL CONNECTION

GET FEATURED IN ARTDOC MAGAZINE

We invite photographers to share visual stories that reflect connection across borders, cultures and experiences. How do we express unity and belonging in today's world?

SUBMIT BY 11 AUGUST 2025 | ARTDOC.PHOTO/SUBMIT

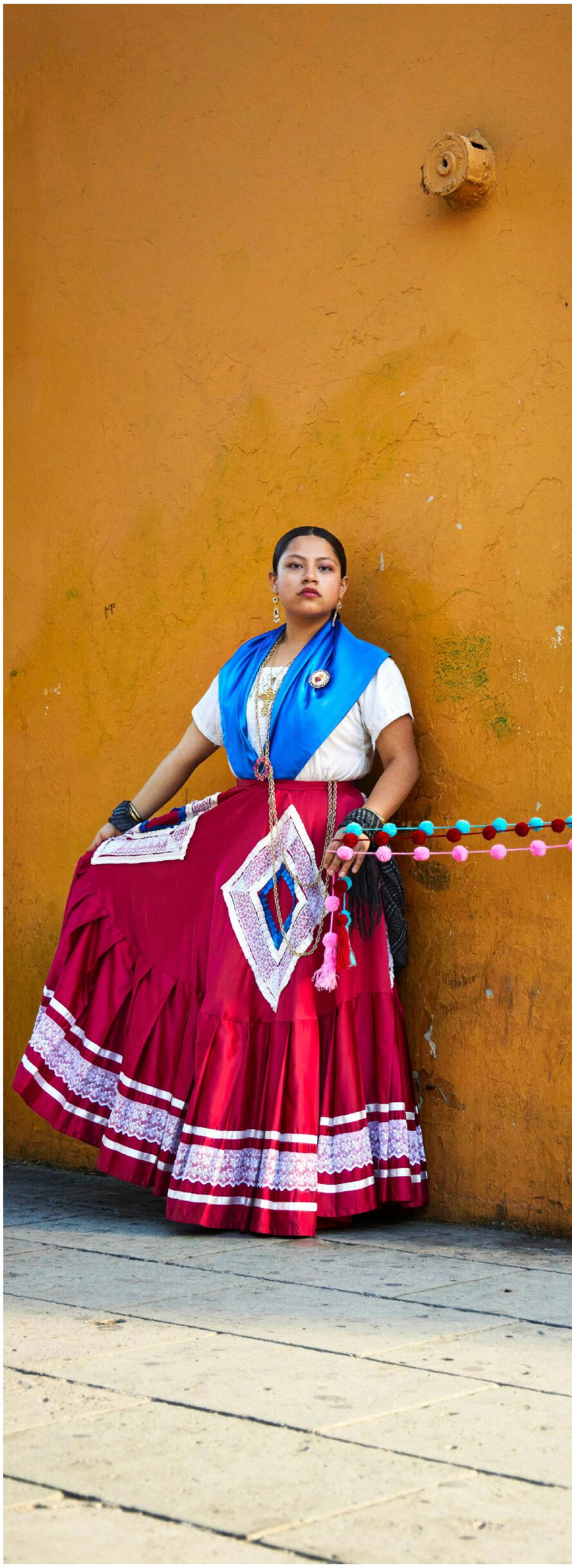
The Oaxaqueñas

Brian Sassmann

“Oaxaca stands out as Mexico’s most culturally diverse state, featuring 16 recognised indigenous groups, each possessing unique languages, traditions, and artistic expressions that trace back to pre-Hispanic times. In the capital, Oaxaca de Juárez, indigenous festivals happen daily, transforming the streets into showcases of music, dance, and the vivid colours of traditional attire.

The Oaxaqueñas provides a photographic glimpse into this vibrant culture, which shapes Oaxaca’s Indigenous identity and thrives through the transmission of ritual beliefs and traditions.

Guided by a deep appreciation for Oaxaca’s indigenous communities, this series focuses on clothing and dance that are inextricably linked to the state’s folkloric heritage.



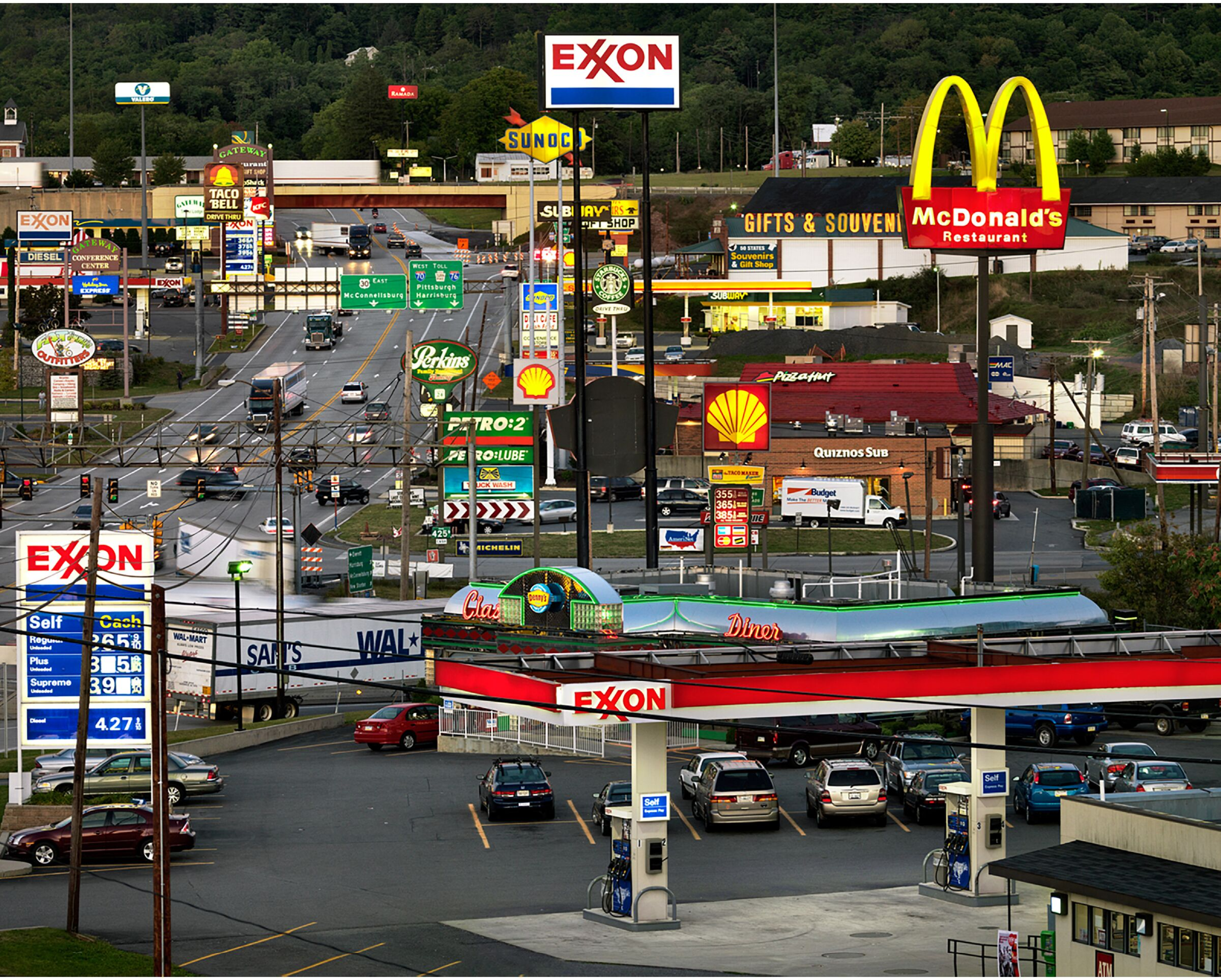
About

Brian is a professional photographer based in Brooklyn. Born and raised in a small town in Kansas, Brian defied the odds, propelled by a mix of destiny and the encouragement of a few visionary mentors, to pursue his dream of becoming a photographer. His career has taken him on an extraordinary journey. From photographing fashion campaigns amid the ancient beauty of Sicilian villages to capturing striking advertising campaigns in NYC. His work has also taken him deep in the field, documenting the work of social businesses and NGOs in places like Haiti, Rwanda, and Burundi.

www.briansassmann.com

All Images © Brian Sassmann | The Oaxaqueñas (Hermanas)

All Images © Brian Sassmann | The Oaxaqueñas (Hermanas)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SUNOCO
GATEWAY
TACO BELL
KFC
SUBWAY
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McDonald's
Restaurant
DIESEL
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Regular
Plus
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WAL-MART
SAM'S
Denny's
Diner
ATM

© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Breezewood, Pennsylvania, USA, 2008

The Great Acceleration

Edward Burtynsky

The International Center of Photography (ICP) has announced *The Great Acceleration*, the first solo institutional exhibition of world renowned photographer Edward Burtynsky's work in New York City in over twenty years. The exhibition will reveal the depth of his investigation into the human alteration of natural landscapes around the world, showing their present fragility and enduring beauty in equal measure.

Curated by David Campany, Creative Director at ICP, this retrospective exhibition will present over seventy photographs, including many of Burtynsky's landmark images, some of which have never previously been exhibited, along with three ultra high-resolution murals. The exhibition will also include a visual and narrative timeline of Burtynsky's creative life. Intentionally scheduled to extend through Climate Week NYC in September 2025, *The Great Acceleration* will serve not only as an urgent call for action, but will also give visitors the opportunity to appreciate the sublimity that remains in the landscape, while deepening our understanding of the challenges that confront us today. In this way, *The Great Acceleration* upholds ICP's long-standing and core commitment to present concerned photography that can inspire new audiences.

Concerned photography

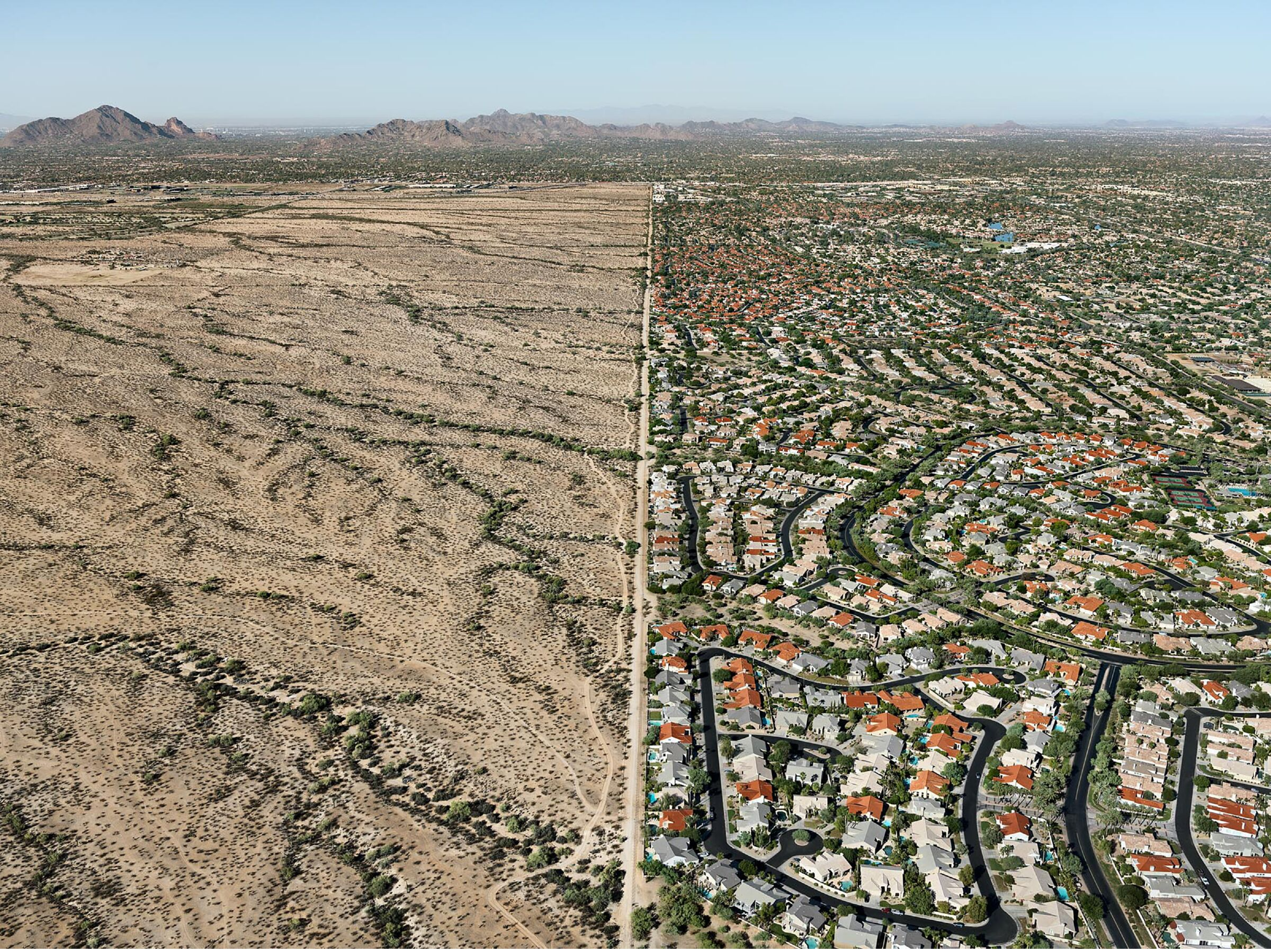
"ICP has long championed 'concerned photography'—imagery that informs and inspires action—which aligns deeply with my own practice," said Edward Burtynsky. "At such a critical moment in time, I hope this work sparks meaningful dialogue about our relationship with the planet and brings more people to this awareness."

The exhibition title, *The Great Acceleration*, is an established term used to describe the rapid rise of human impact on our planet according to a range of measures, among them population growth, water usage, transportation, greenhouse gas emissions, resource extraction and food production, each of which Burtynsky has photographed the outward signs of at length and in great detail over the past forty years. From open pit mines across North America to oil derricks in Azerbaijan, from rice terraces in China to oil bunkering in Nigeria, Burtynsky has travelled across the world and back again as part of his restless and seemingly inexhaustible drive to discover the ways, both old and new, that organized human activity has transformed the natural world. Though already unified by both the precision and formal beauty that Burtynsky deploys to create each photograph, *The Great Acceleration* further underscores that, like their respective subjects, each project remains fundamentally interconnected.

Critical issues of our time

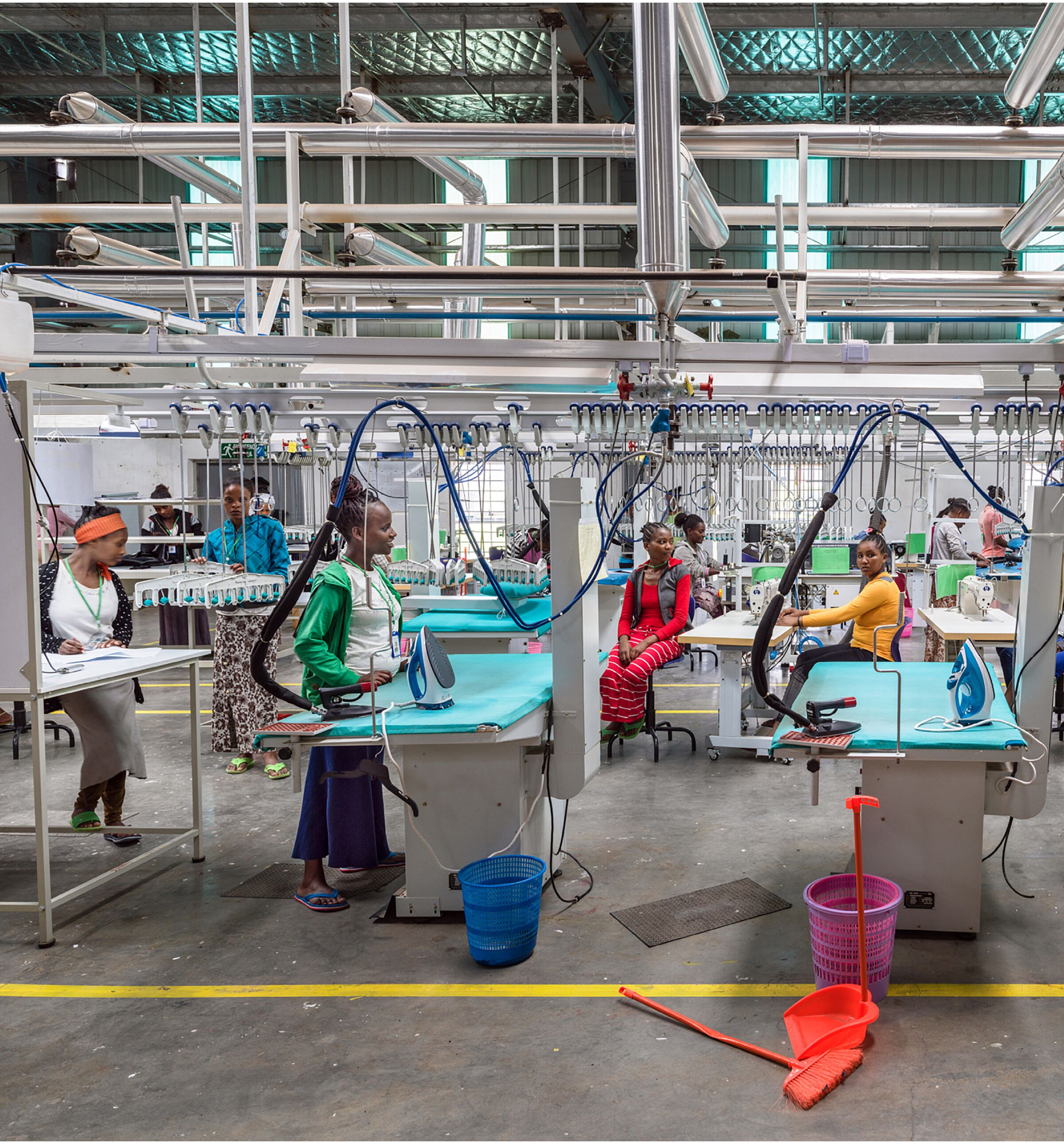
"ICP is dedicated to championing work that addresses critical issues of our time, so we are delighted to exhibit Edward's work," said David Campany, ICP's Creative Director. "Conceived especially for our largest galleries, *The Great Acceleration* will present suites of monumental images that draw attention to the severity of the impact we are having on the planet, while also offering a contemplative space for reflecting upon photography's role and potential today."

Since the 1980s Burtynsky has remained steadfast in his commitment to document the evolving relationship between contemporary life and the landscapes being remade by its demands. Beginning in his native Canada, the exhibition quickly moves to establish the international scope of his work while also highlighting the recurring subjects and themes that have continued to occupy him—including the intertwining of fossil fuels and consumerism, global infrastructure, precarious labor conditions and the challenges of mass recycling, among others—regardless of where he has worked or with what new technologies.



© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Salt River Pima and Maricopa Indian Community / Suburb, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA, 2011

> “The Great Acceleration will present suites of monumental images that draw attention to the severity of the impact we are having on the planet.

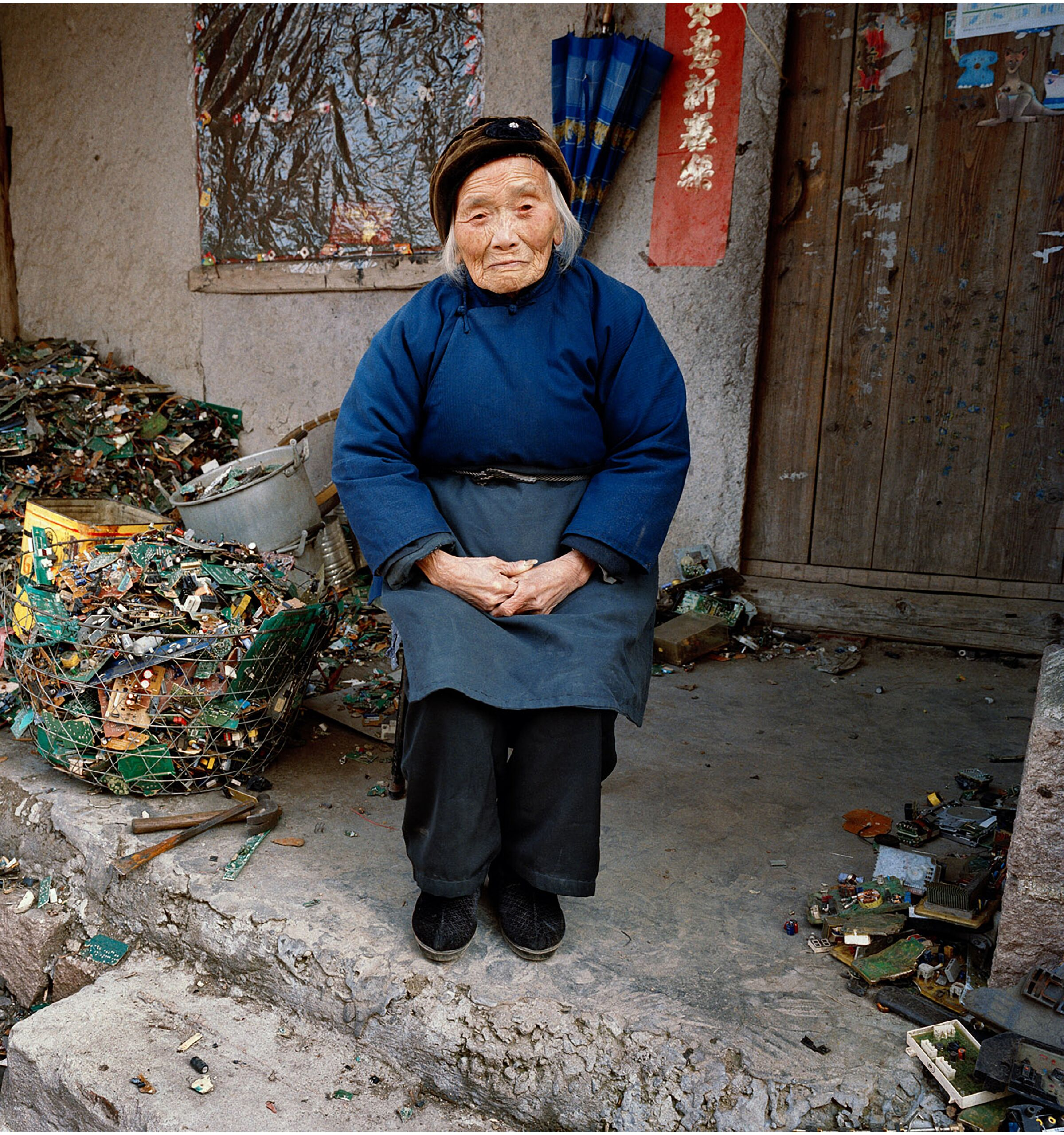


© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Silver Spark Apparel #1, Hawassa Industrial Park, Awassa, Ethiopia, 2018

Moving through the exhibition, we follow Burtynsky into marble quarries and factories, into mining towns and industrialized farms. With him as our guide, we traverse across mega cities and barren landscapes, across scrap yards and factories. Though widely known for his aerial photographs that present epic views of the landscape, within which human presence can be seen but loosely felt, Burtynsky just as often documents our collective activity up close and with disarming intensity. Included in this exhibition are rarely-seen portraits he has made over the years of workers from around the world, from factories in China to the shipbreaking coasts of Bangladesh, which remind us of the intimately human scale at the heart of what his photographs often show us from great distances. The physical scale and thematic scope of *The Great Acceleration* will unfold throughout both floors of ICP's galleries, making it an exhibition that demands an in-person experience, one that allows us to sit with the overwhelming beauty of the natural landscape just as we consider the necessary changes to our myriad 'business as usual' operations that will empower and inspire a sustainable future.

About Edward Burtynsky

Edward Burtynsky is regarded as one of the world's most accomplished contemporary photographers. His remarkable photographic depictions of global industrial landscapes represent over 40 years of his dedication to bearing witness to the impact of humans on the planet. Burtynsky's photographs are included in the collections of over 80 major museums around the world. Major (touring) exhibitions include: BURTYNSKY: Extraction/Abstraction (2024) which premiered at London's Saatchi Gallery; Anthropocene (2018); Water (2013) organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art & Contemporary Art Center, Louisiana; Oil (2009) at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.; China (2005 five-year tour) and Manufactured Landscapes (2003) at the National Gallery of Canada. Burtynsky's distinctions include the inaugural TED Prize in 2005, which he shared with Bono and Robert Fischell; the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts; the Outreach Award at the Rencontres d'Arles; the Roloff Beny Book award and the 2018 Photo London Master of Photography Award. In 2019 he was the recipient of the Arts & Letters Award at the Canadian Association of New York's annual Maple Leaf Ball and the 2019 Lucie Award for Achievement in Documentary Photography. In 2020 he was awarded a Royal Photographic Society Honorary Fellowship and in 2022 was honoured with the Outstanding Contribution to Photography Award by the World Photography Organization. In 2022 he was inducted into the International Photography Hall of Fame and was named the 2022 recipient for the annual Pollution Probe Award. Most recently he received the 2023 PHotoESPAÑA Award for Professional Career and was awarded with the 25th edition of the Pino Pascali Prize. Burtynsky was also a key production figure in the award-winning documentary trilogy Manufactured Landscapes (dir. Jennifer Baichwal, 2006), Watermark (dir. Baichwal and Burtynsky, 2013) and ANTHROPOCENE: The Human Epoch (dir. Baichwal, Nicholas de Pencier, and Burtynsky, 2018). All three films continue to play in festivals around the world. Burtynsky currently holds nine honorary doctorate degrees.



© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | China Recycling #22, Portrait of A Woman In Blue Zeguo, Zhejiang Province, China, 2004

© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Modjo-Hawassa Expressway #1, Alem Tena, Ethiopia, 2018

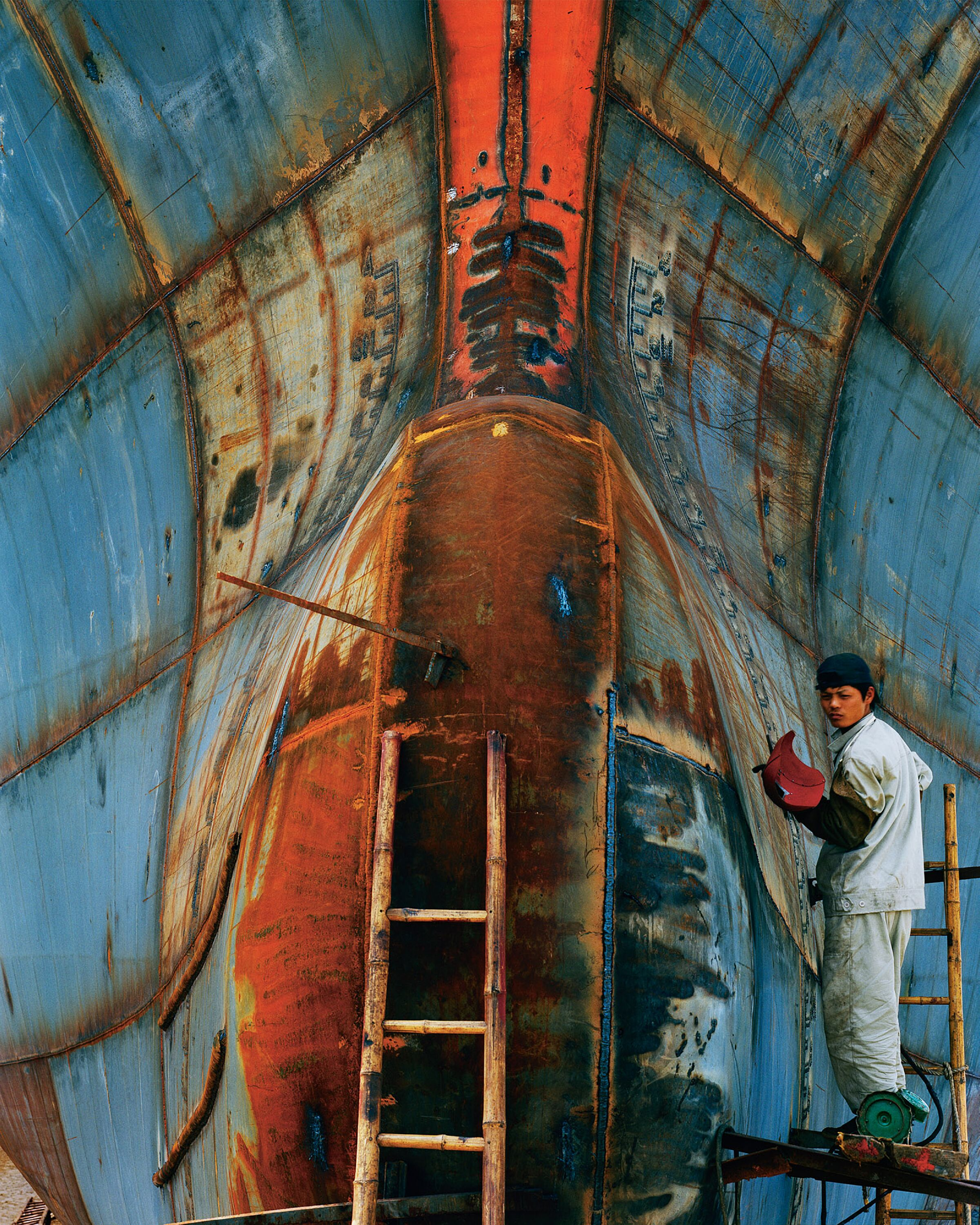
© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Highway #5, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2009

© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Manufacturing #7, Textile Mill, Xiaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China, 2004

About The International Center of Photography

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion "concerned photography"—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Since its inception, ICP has presented more than 700 exhibitions, provided thousands of classes, and hosted a wide variety of public programs. ICP launched its new integrated center at 84 Ludlow Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side in January 2020. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape people, and other Indigenous communities. Visit icp.org to learn more about the museum and its programs.

www.icp.org



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> ICP has long championed ‘concerned photography’—imagery that informs and inspires action—which aligns deeply with my own practice.
>
> - Edward Burtynsky

© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York | Shipyard #19, Qili Port, Zhejiang Province, China, 2005

© Andrej Verzola | Notes on the Occupation

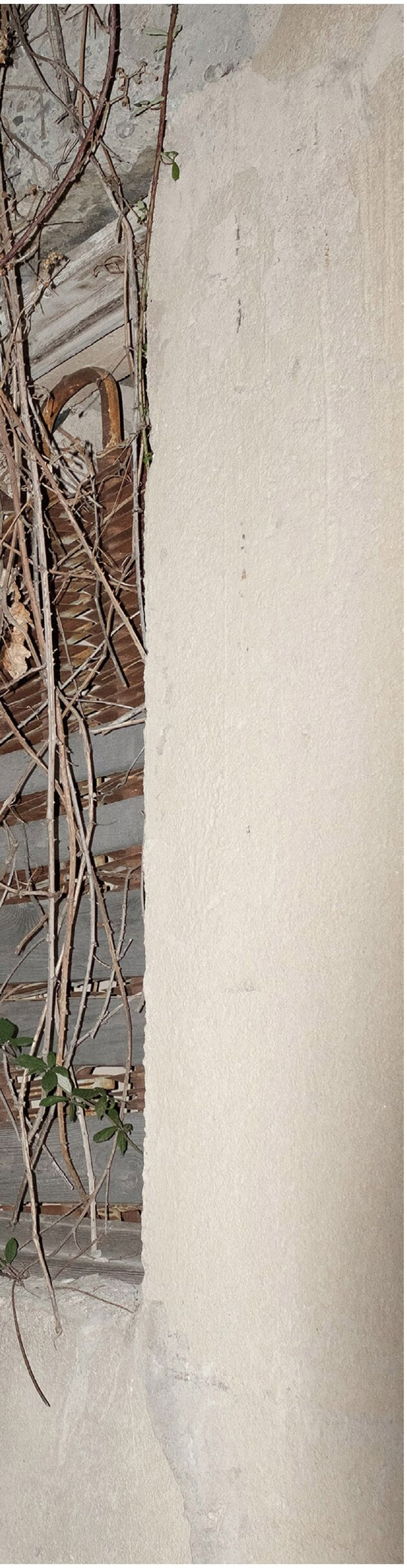
Notes on the Occupation

Andrej Verzola

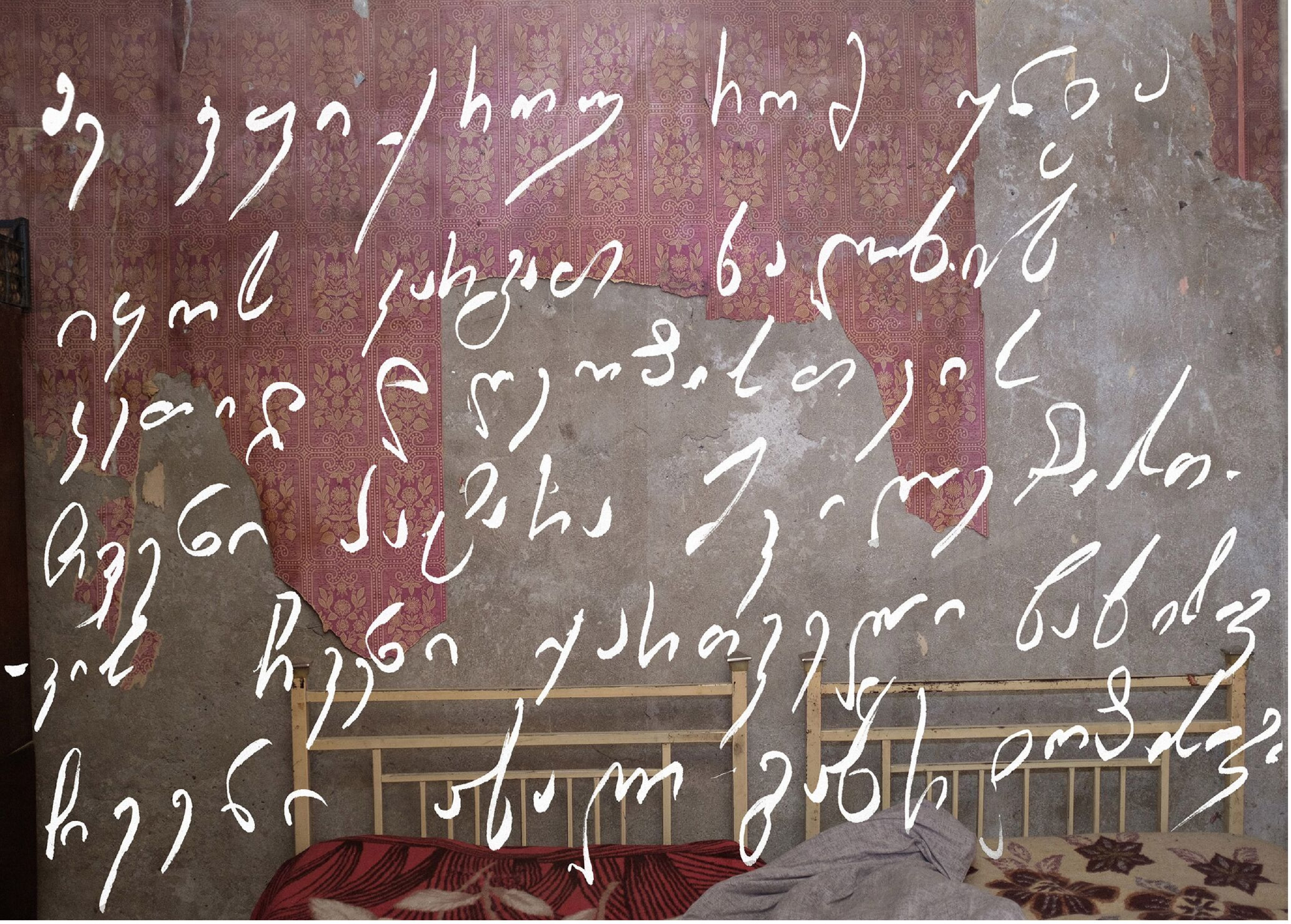
This project explores the human cost of Russia's occupation of South Ossetia since 2008. Along the tense contact line, Georgian villagers face daily fear, arbitrary detentions, and violent intimidation. Through personal stories of those imprisoned for crossing invisible borders, the work of Andrej Verzola reveals a stark reality of life in the "Zone of Fear."

“In 2008, Russia invaded Georgia and occupied two regions, including South Ossetia. The line of contact between Georgia and South Ossetia stretches approximately four hundred kilometres, with over ten thousand people residing in its immediate vicinity on the Georgian-controlled side. The population of this so-called “Zone of Fear” mostly consists of farmers residing in small, semi-abandoned villages. Following the war, many residents of these lands fled to Tbilisi or Gori, but some chose to remain, feeling deeply connected to their land. Locals suffer from systematic encroachment by Russian troops, who often erect “border” fences overnight, seizing pastures, churches, cemeteries, and water sources. This strategy aims to intimidate and disconnect them from their roots. Moreover, since 2008, approximately 3,500 cases of illegal detention of Georgian citizens by Russian and South Ossetian authorities have been recorded.

My project documents the stories of some Georgians who were detained near the occupation line by Russian border forces and imprisoned in Tskhinvali. Over the course of a year and a half, I travelled through these regions, speaking to those for whom detentions have become routine. Some were arrested once, while others multiple times—one man was captured five times. For them, life is divided into “before” and “after” the arrest: a trip to a once-familiar pasture or a visit to the grave of a loved one could lead to a new detention and prison term. Many have endured brutal beatings, and some have lost their lives for crossing the occupation line.



All images © Andrej Verzola | Notes on the Occupation



All images © Andrej Verzola | Notes on the Occupation

ქუთაისის
შვათა ეკლესიიდან

About

Andrej Verzola was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia. After high school, he moved to Poland to study cinematography at the Łódź Film School. He worked in commercial and music video productions before transitioning to text-based media. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, he moved to Georgia, where part of his family resides. Living in Georgia, Andrej encountered many affected by the 2008 Russian invasion, deepening his understanding of the nature of Russian imperialism and interest in occupied territories. He now divides his time between Tbilisi and Berlin, developing a website for the current project.

What Unites Us

Maria Helena Ramalho

“My photographic practice arises from a desire to listen with my eyes. I seek to capture the silent gestures that reveal our shared humanity, connecting us beyond geographic, social, or spiritual distances.

In this series, *What Unites Us*, I photographed a popular celebration dedicated to Our Lady in a rural community in Brazil. More than just a religious event, I encountered genuine expressions of affection, faith, memory, and belonging. For me, the sacred is not only found in religious images but also in the bodies walking together, in the hands offering flowers, and in the emotional faces carrying hope.

I choose to photograph from within, with emotional involvement. I am not merely behind the lens as an observer — I am present as someone who shares in what I see. I like to portray what pulses between the individual and the collective, the spiritual and the everyday.

I believe photography has the power to broaden our listening to the world. Furthermore, listening to others — particularly those frequently excluded from art and history — is an act that is both profoundly political and poetic.

With this series, I hope to provide images that encourage pause and empathy. Images that remind us it is still possible to recognise ourselves in the face of another. For in the end, that is what we are: humanity in motion, in prayer, in celebration — together.

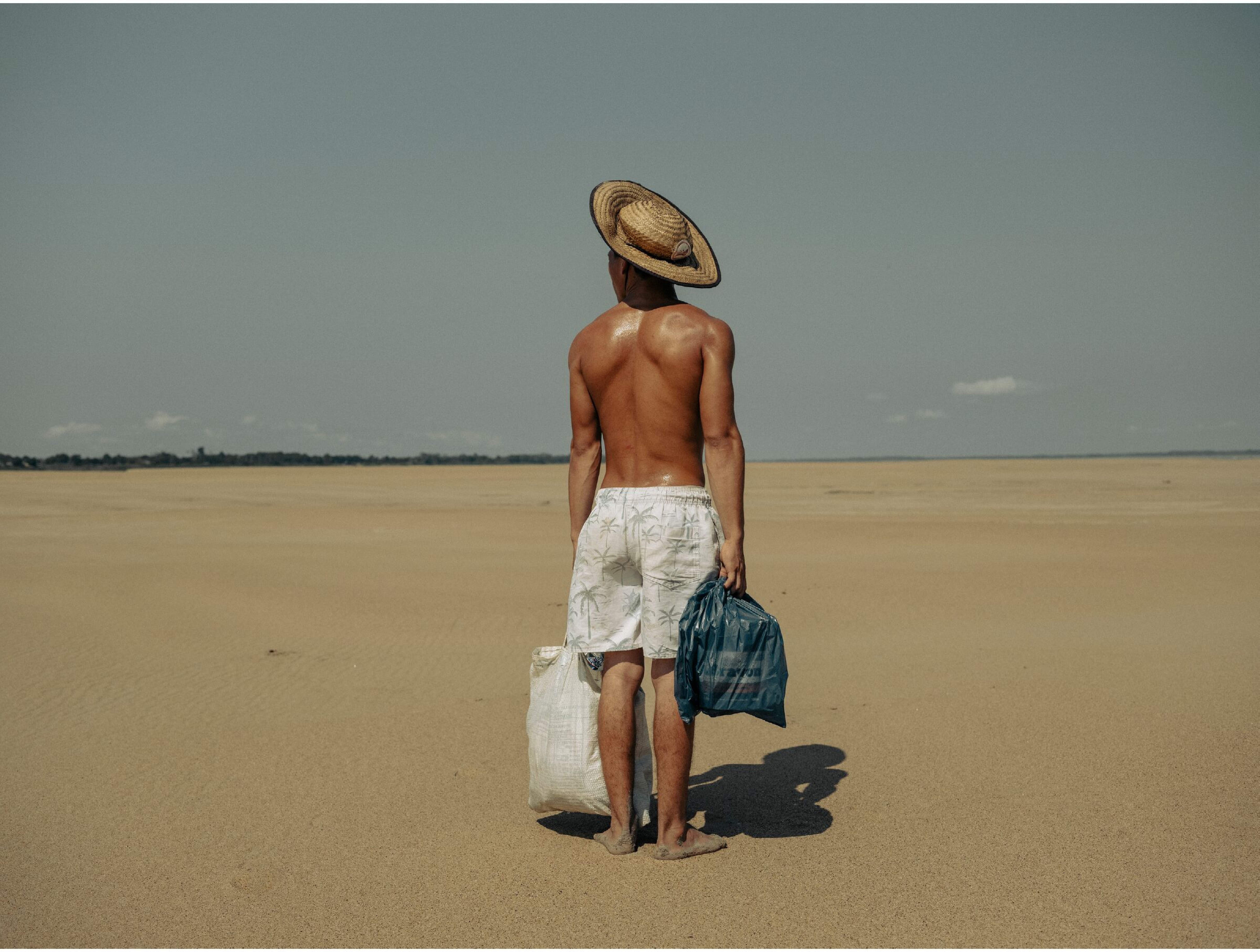
About

Maria Helena Ramalho is a Brazilian photographer and visual researcher. She studied Photography at the University of Vale do Itajaí (SC) in 2020 and, since 2022, has participated in immersive experiences in Brazil and abroad with renowned Brazilian photographers. Her work focuses on documenting cultural expressions, popular spirituality, and the emotional aspects of everyday life in traditional communities. Through a sensitive documentary approach, she creates visual essays that intertwine memory, territory, and humanity, emphasising belonging and listening. Her images have been featured in group exhibitions and independent publications in Brazil, highlighting peripheral narratives and resilient ways of life.

www.mariademinas.com.br

© Maria Helena Ramalho I What Unites Us

All images © Maria Helena Ramalho | What Unites Us



© Musuk Nolte, Panos Pictures, Bertha Foundation | Droughts in the Amazon - A young man brings food to his mother who lives in the village of Manacapuru. The village was once accessible by boat, but because of the drought, he must walk 2 kilometers along the dry riverbed of the Solimões River to reach her. Amazonas, Brazil, 5 October 2024. The Amazon River is experiencing record low-water levels due to severe drought intensified by climate change. This ecological crisis threatens biodiversity, disrupts ecosystems, and impacts local communities reliant on rivers for survival. As droughts intensify, many settlers face the difficult choice of abandoning their land and livelihoods for urban areas, changing the social fabric of this region permanently. This project makes the effects of climate change, which can so often be abstract or difficult to represent, appear as a tangible and concrete reality shaping the futures of vulnerable communities closely connected with the natural world.

The World Press photographs help us comprehend the world

WORLD PRESS PHOTO

Every year since 1955, World Press Photo, based in Amsterdam, has organised a contest for the best photojournalistic photographs or series of images. World Press Photo not only organises contests but also supports the audience in enhancing their visual literacy. The organisation published a free online book called *See the Story* to explain how to read and understand visual stories, delving into the winning stories of 2025. The text aims to spark discussion about contemporary issues. We read some highlights from *See the Story*.

Photojournalism plays a crucial role in democratic societies. The hundreds of images we see every day help us understand what's happening around the world and make informed decisions. Visual stories are a contemporary form of photography that encompasses both documentary and autonomous photography, a synthetic blend of the old divisions in photography.

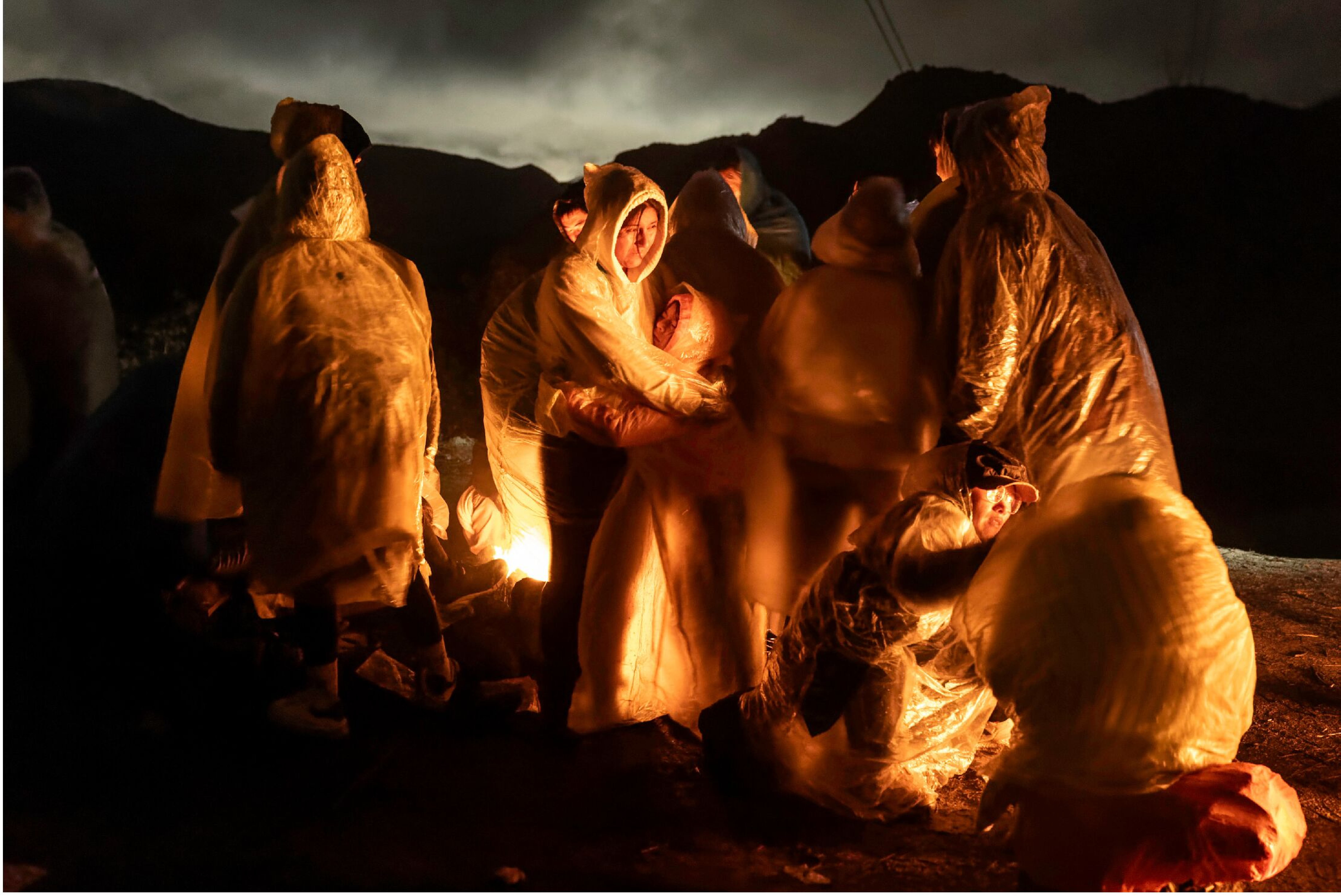
Since 2021, World Press Photo has introduced the regional model, in which the world is divided into six different regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific and Oceania, Europe, North and Central America, South America, and West, Central, and South Asia. This regional model is important because it gives more possibilities to region photographers to showcase their work and get it exposed to the world.

History of the World Press Photo

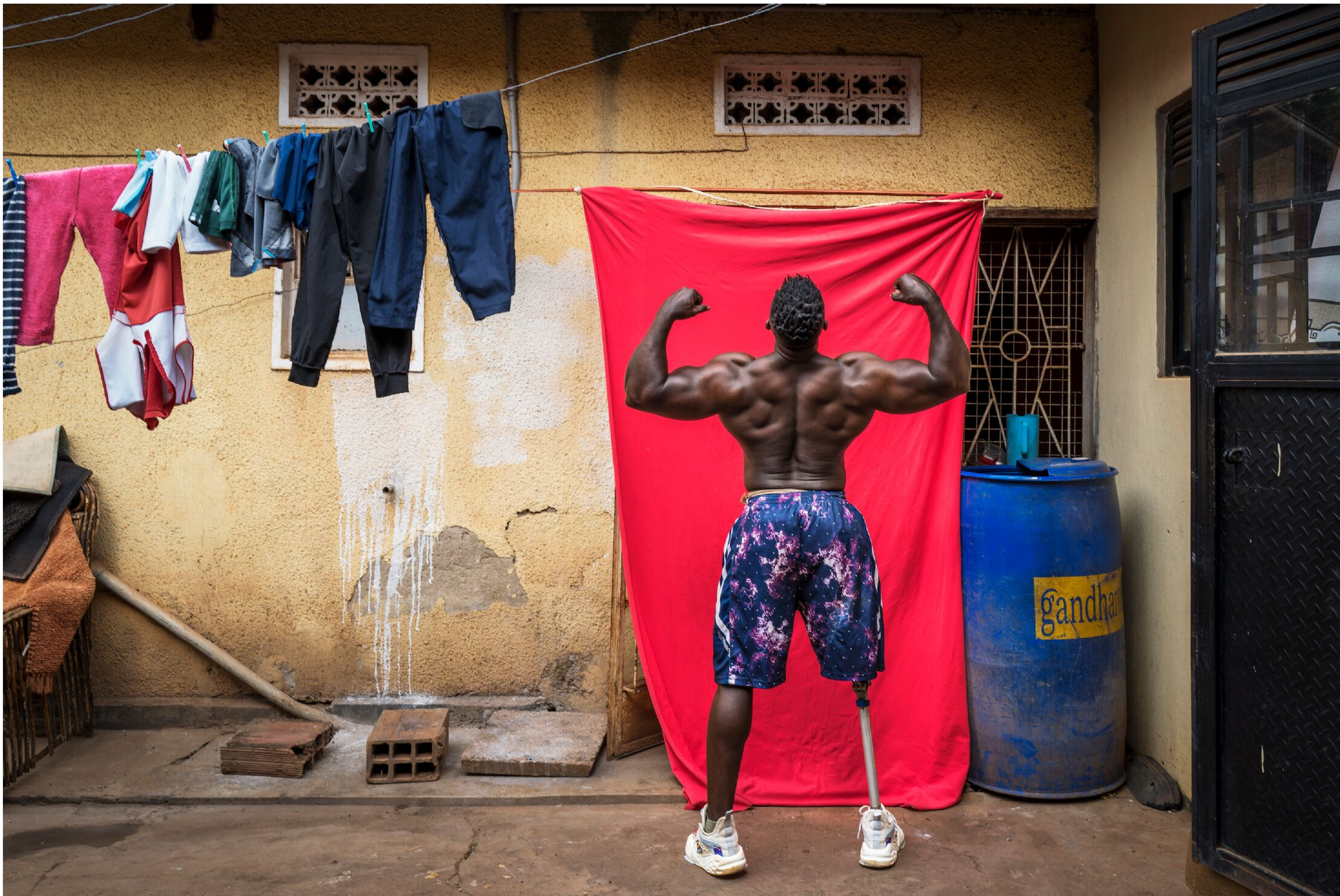
2025 marks the 70th anniversary of World Press Photo. The first contest took place in 1955 when members of the Dutch photojournalists' union had the idea of transforming a national competition – the Zilveren Camera – into an international one. In that inaugural year, 42 photographers from 11 countries submitted just over 300 photographs for judging. The contest has grown significantly over the past 70 years: in 2025, 3,778 photographers from 141 countries submitted 59,320 photos. Since 1955, World Press Photo has been building an archive of photographs, publications, posters, educational materials, and much more. World Press Photo is now embarking on new projects and activities to enhance the archive's accessibility for curators, researchers, and audiences. Over the next two years, World Press Photo will develop a new, easily searchable database to ensure that the archive can be explored and utilised effectively. The archive will be enriched by a research project aimed at revisiting the history of the World Press Photo collections, thereby adding further information and context.

Challenging desensitisation

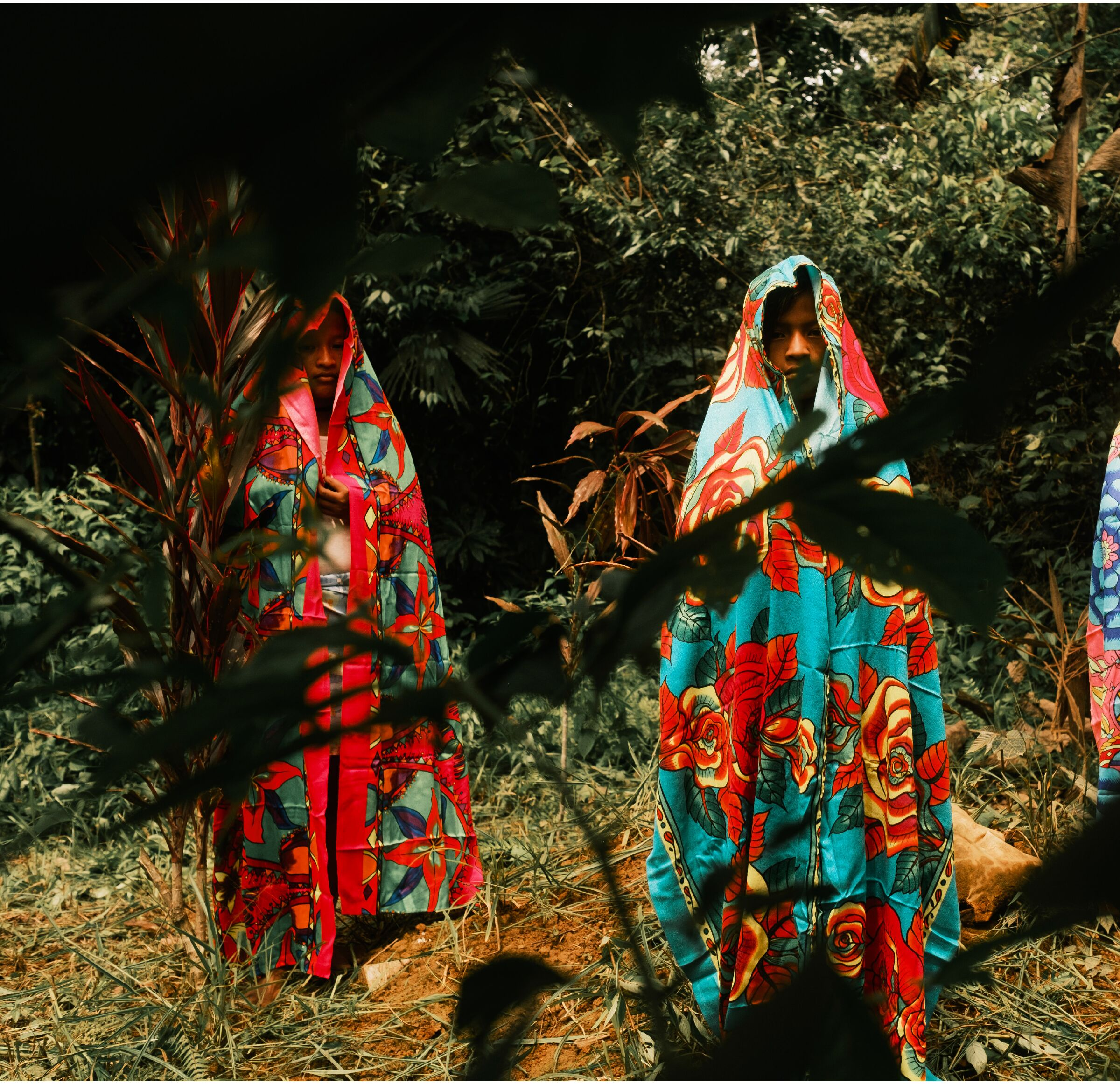
A compelling example of a photo story challenging desensitisation to migration is the long-term project *The Two Walls* by Alejandro Cegarra, which was awarded in the 2024 Contest. Migration is often portrayed in the news by depicting people on the run as a group, rather than highlighting individuals with their own unique stories. Drawing from his experience of migrating from Venezuela to Mexico in 2017, photographer Alejandro Cegarra has spent more than six years documenting migrants attempting to reach the United States through Mexico. He engages with them and captures intimate moments they experience, such as this couple that fell in love during their journey. Through his photography, Cegarra seeks to promote greater understanding, empathy, and solidarity for the migrants striving to reach the United States.



© John Moore, Getty Images | Night Crossing - Chinese migrants warm themselves during a cold rain after crossing the US–Mexico border. Campo, California, 7 March 2024.



© Marijn Fidder | Tamale Safalu - Bodybuilder Tamale Safalu trains in front of his home. Kampala, Uganda, 25 January 2024.



© Santiago Mesa | Jaidë - María Camila, Luisa, and Noraisi Birry stand by the grave of their sister Yadira, while wearing the paruma shawls Yadira left behind. Yadira Birry (16) took her own life with a paruma on 7 April 2023. Chocó, Colombia, 20 June 2024. The Emberá Dobida are a nomadic indigenous people of Colombia who historically have inhabited an area around the Bojayá River. Many Emberá have migrated to Bogotá, fleeing conflict among Colombia's paramilitary forces and searching for safety and opportunity. In the capital, they face discrimination and marginalization, living in overcrowded and unsafe conditions. Suicides in the Emberá community have sharply increased, from 15 cases between 2015 and 2020 to 67 suicides and over 400 attempts by 2024, according to the Church of Bellavista in Bojayá. This project follows the lives of Emberá women impacted by the crisis, bringing attention and empathy to a harsh reality.

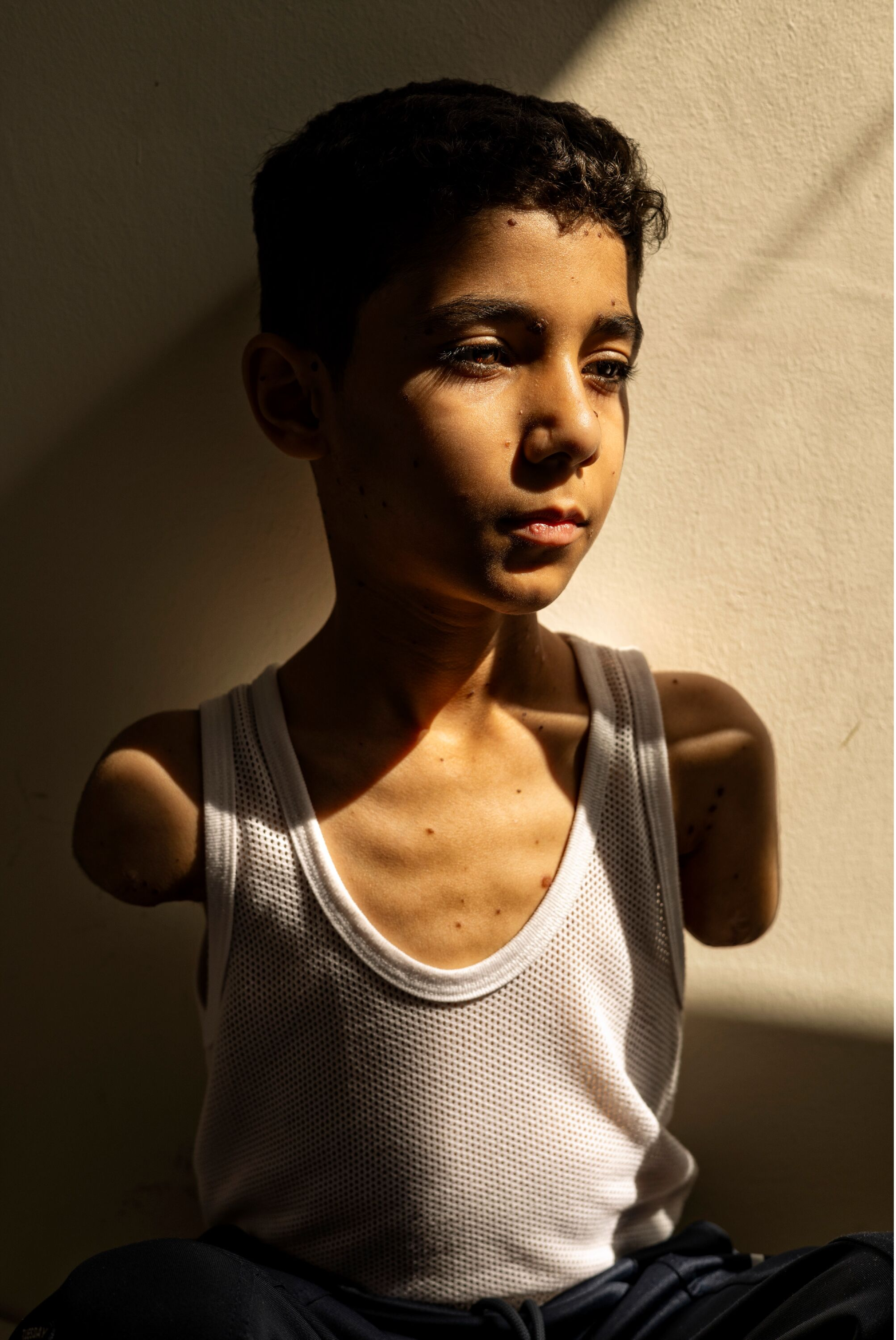
Photography Ethics

Images influence our perception of the world. By creating and sharing images, we actively shape how others interpret reality. This carries significant responsibility. Fulfilling this responsibility requires that photojournalists navigate complex ethical challenges thoughtfully, make informed decisions, and recognise how context impacts ethical considerations. Entrants to the World Press Photo Contest must adhere to ethical guidelines that ensure fair representation, dignity, and respect for the people and stories they document. This includes avoiding staged or misleading imagery, obtaining informed consent from the people photographed, protecting vulnerable individuals, maintaining independence, prioritising safety, avoiding stereotypes, and ensuring accuracy and transparency in captions and storytelling.

Visual Tropes

Visual tropes are symbols frequently employed in photography to express human conditions and narratives. They embody a strong significance independent of context, space, and time frame; for this reason, they have also become conventional representations and stereotypes of specific human conditions.

Some visual tropes found in the media and in the World Press archive include, for example, photographs of weeping women (reinforcing the stereotype that women are overly emotional); men depicted as figures of action and authority (perpetuating notions of male dominance); and an overwhelming focus on suffering in the African continent.



© Samar Abu Elouf, for The New York Times I Mahmoud Ajjour, Aged Nine - Mahmoud Ajjour (9), who was injured during an Israeli attack on Gaza City in March 2024, finds refuge and medical help in Qatar. Doha, Qatar, 28 June 2024.

Contest 2025

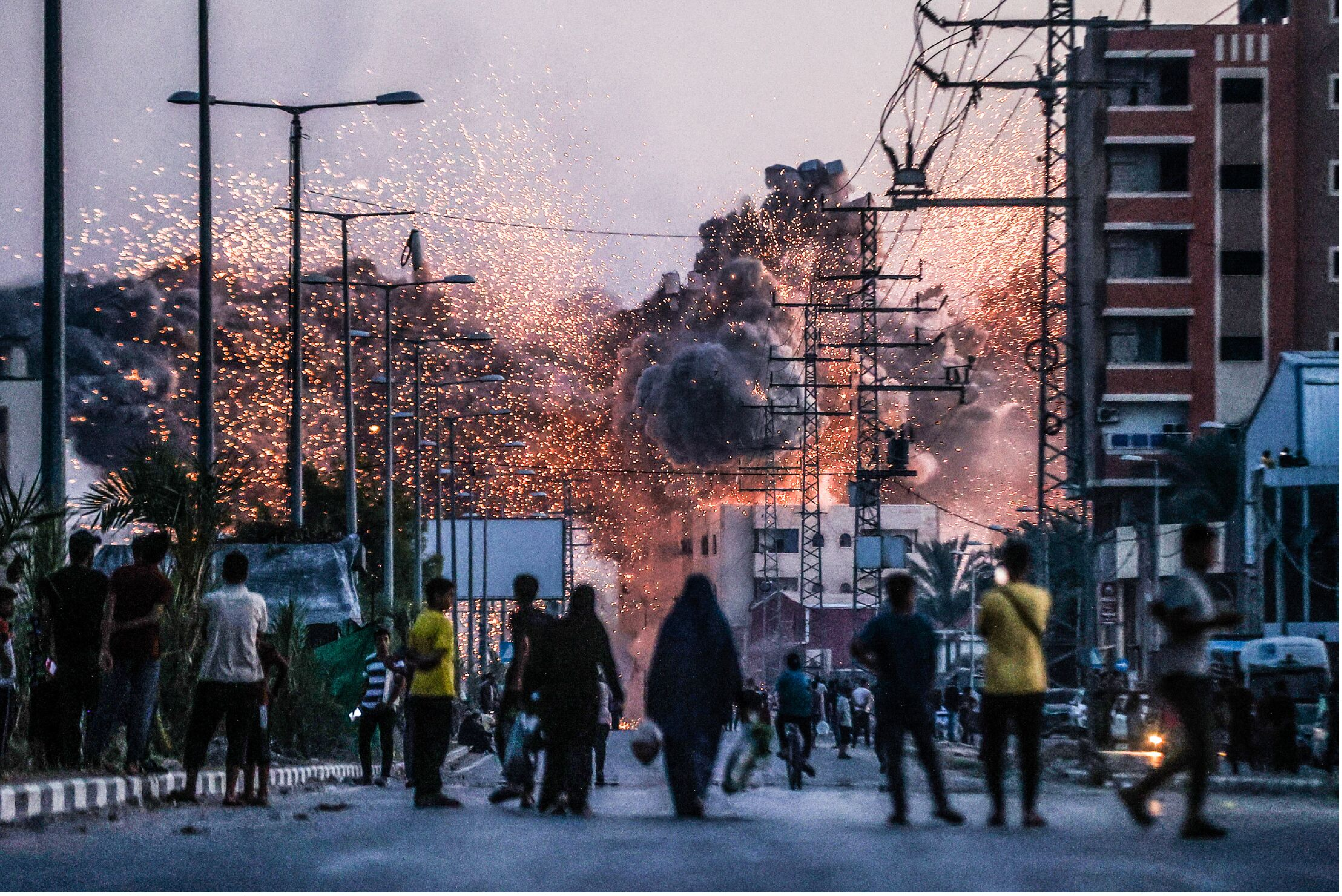
Conflicts do not only take place on frontlines and in war zones. Due to their complexity, documenting conflict can adopt different perspectives and focus on various moments and experiences. Photographers may choose to document the victims, the perpetrators, or those caught in between in their daily lives. Some may even forgo photographing people altogether, instead focusing on objects or landscapes. While some photographers cover war as it unfolds, others document its aftermath and long-term effects on people. These photographs awarded in the 2025 World Press Photo Contest showcase different approaches and visual strategies for portraying conflict and its aftermath. For 2025, the 42 winners were chosen by an independent jury from 59,320 entries. 3,778 photographers from 141 countries.

Photo of the year

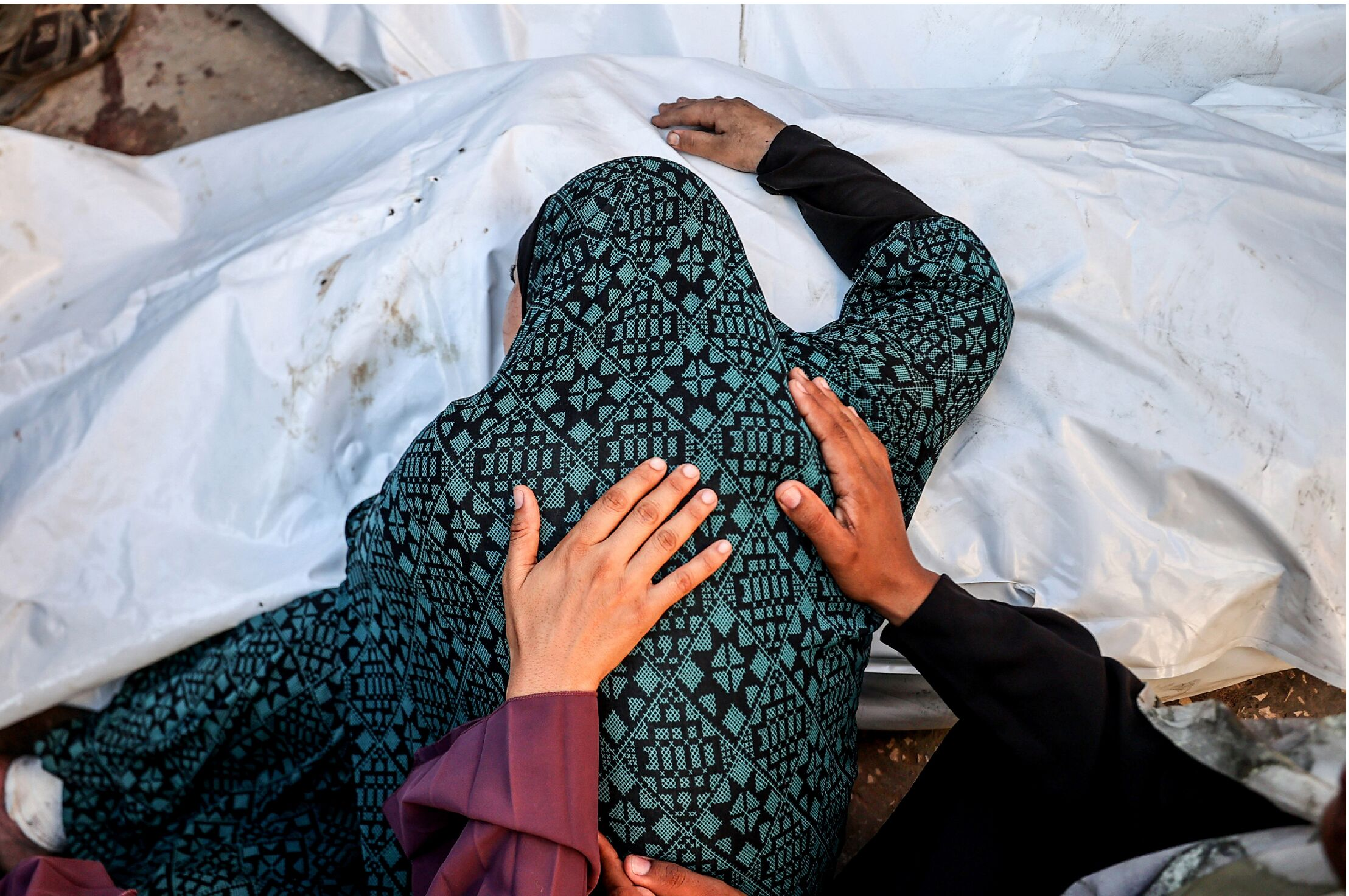
The World Press Photo of the Year is a portrait of Mahmoud Ajjour, aged nine, taken by Samar Abu Elouf of Palestine for The New York Times. Mahmoud Ajjour (9) was severely injured while fleeing an Israeli attack in Gaza City in March 2024. After he turned back to urge his family to move forward, an explosion severed one of his arms and mutilated the other. The war in Gaza has disproportionately affected children. The UN estimates that by December 2024, Gaza had the highest number of child amputees per capita anywhere in the world. The photographer, who is from Gaza and was evacuated herself in December 2023, resides in the same Doha apartment complex as Mahmoud. She has formed bonds with families there and has documented some of the few severely wounded Gazans who made it out for treatment.

The jury commented that, *"this photograph speaks to the long-term costs of war, the silences that perpetuate violence, and the role of journalism in exposing these realities. Without shying away from the corporeal impacts of war, the photo approaches conflict and statelessness from a human angle, shedding light on the physical and psychological traumas civilians have been forced to, and will continue to endure through industrial-scale killing and warfare."*

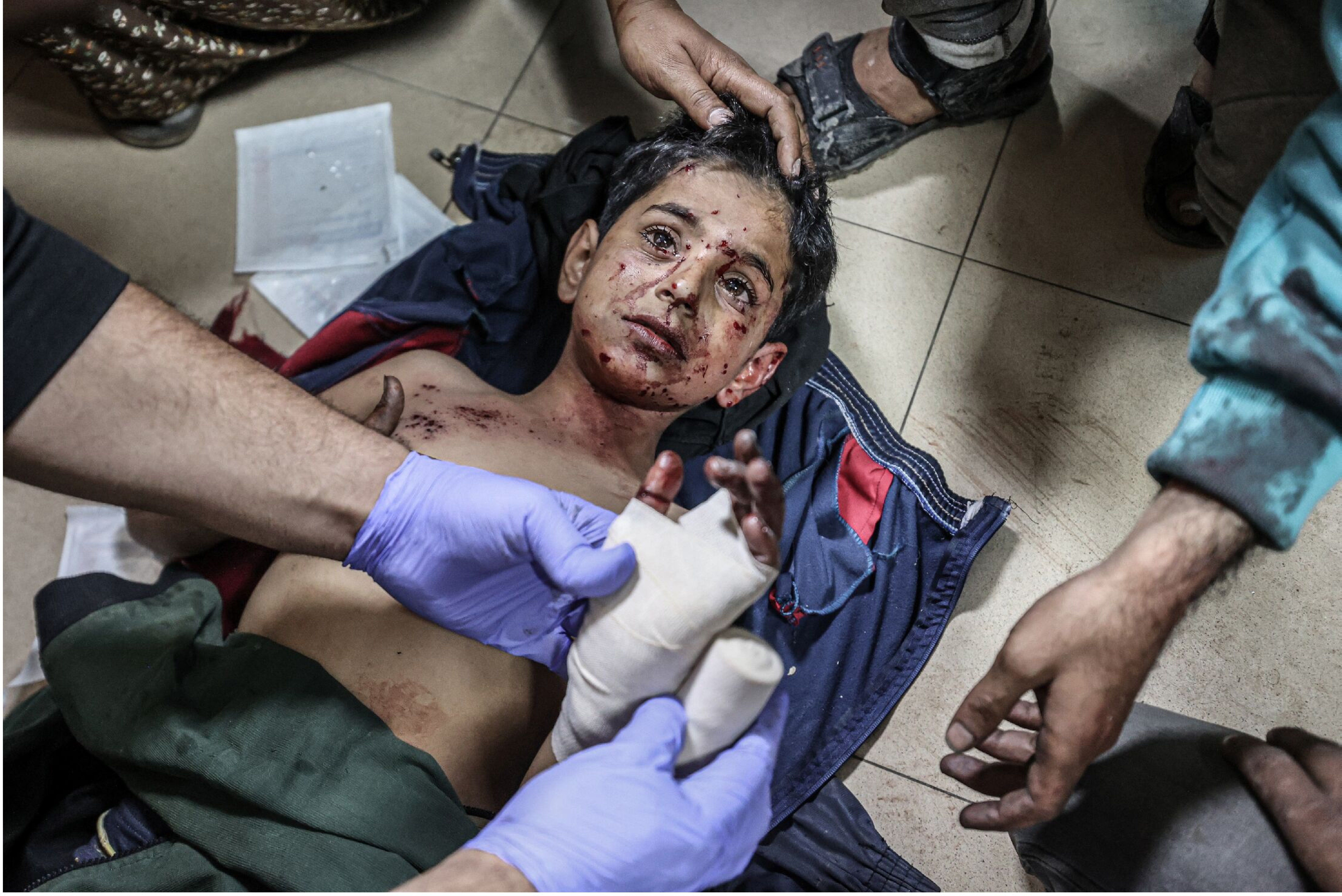
> “ This photograph speaks to the long-term costs of war, the silences that perpetuate violence, and the role of journalism in exposing these realities.



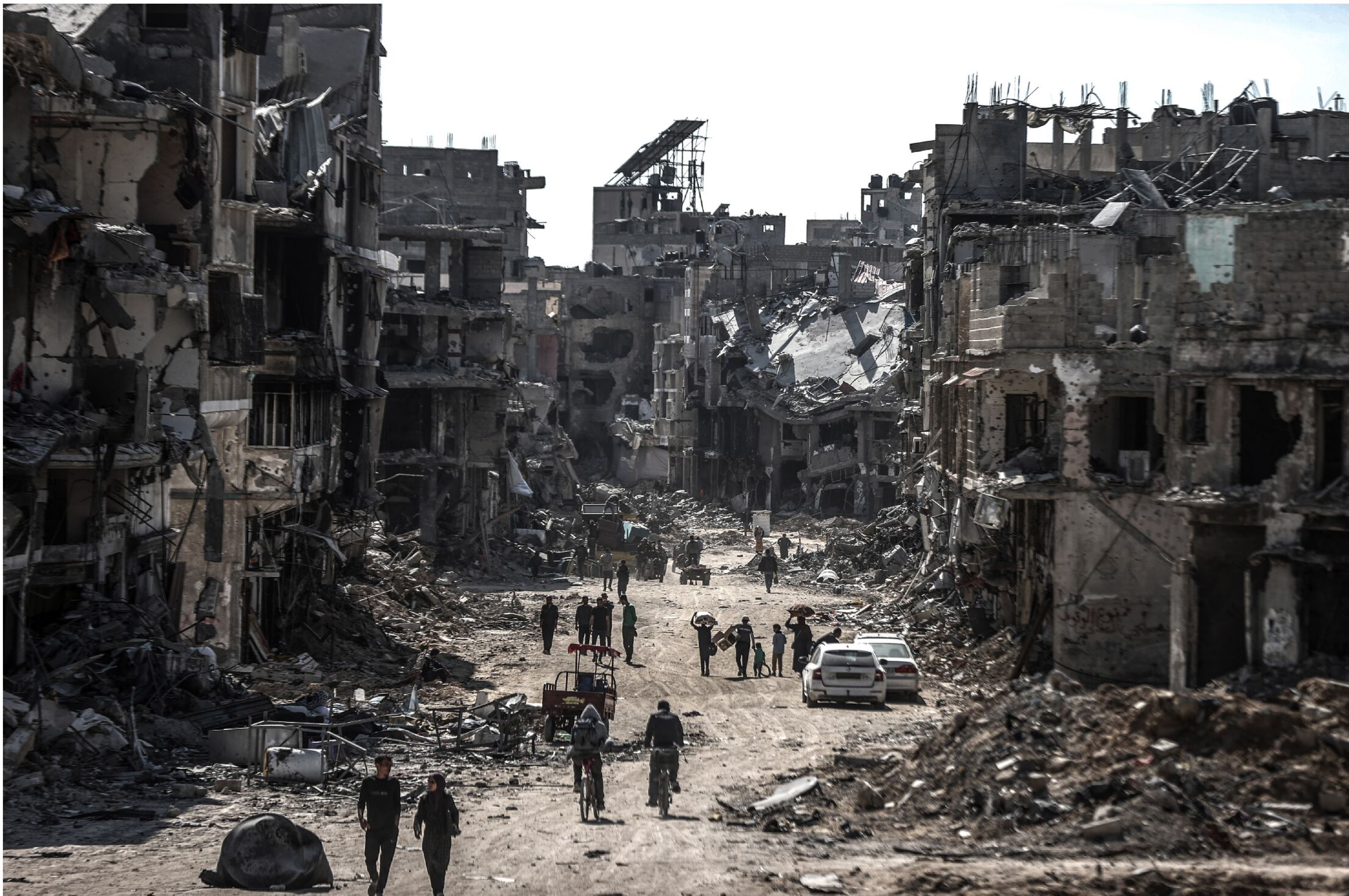
© Ali Jadallah, Anadolu Agency | Gaza Under Israeli Attack - People watch as smoke and flames rise over a building, following Israeli attacks on Deir al-Balah. Israel bombarded the central Gazan city multiple times throughout the year. Gaza, 6 June 2024.



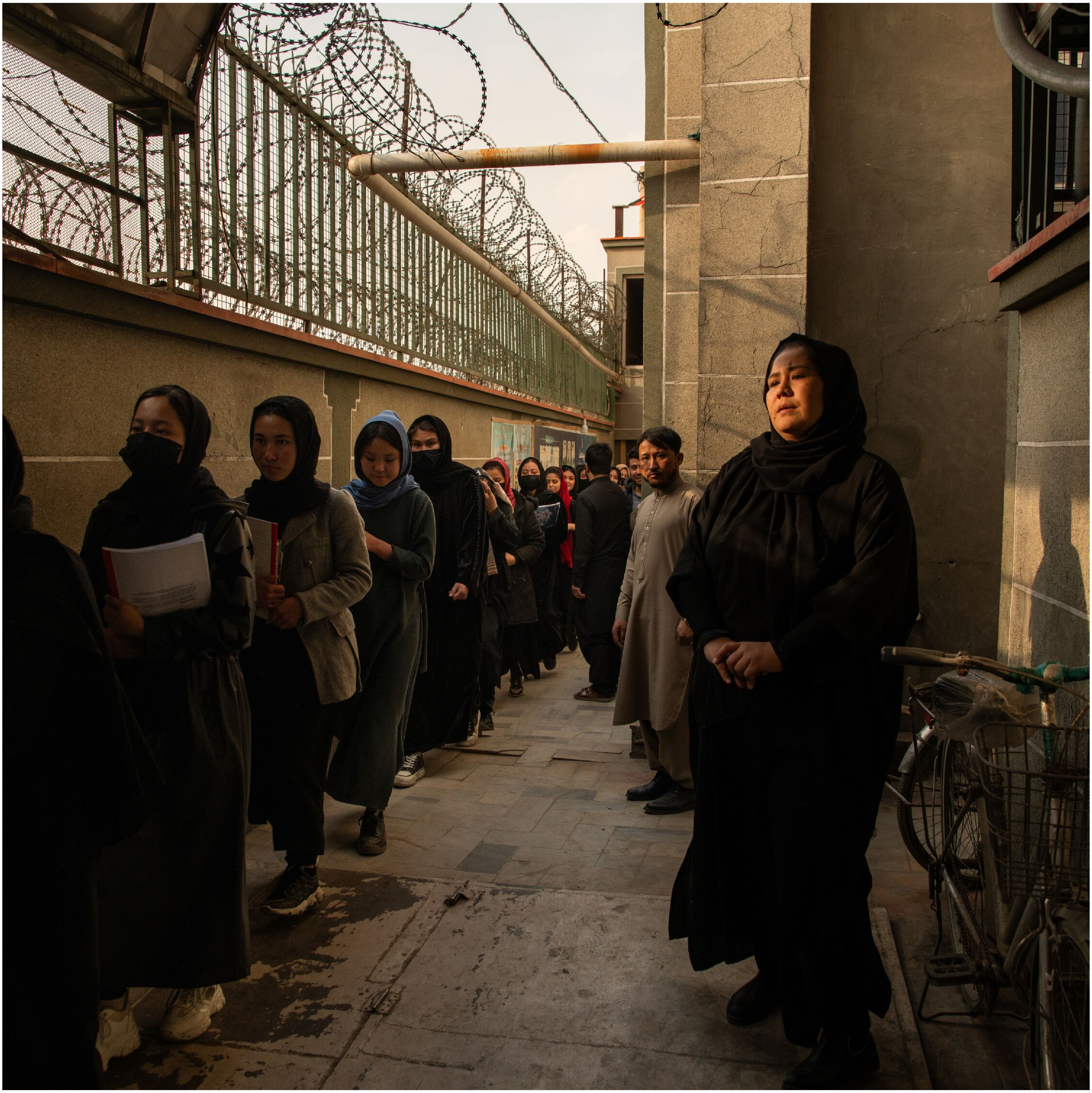
© Ali Jadallah, Anadolu Agency | Gaza Under Israeli Attack - Relatives of people killed in an Israeli attack on the Nuseirat refugee camp mourn as the bodies are brought to al-Aqsa Hospital. Deir al-Balah, Gaza, 9 August 2024.



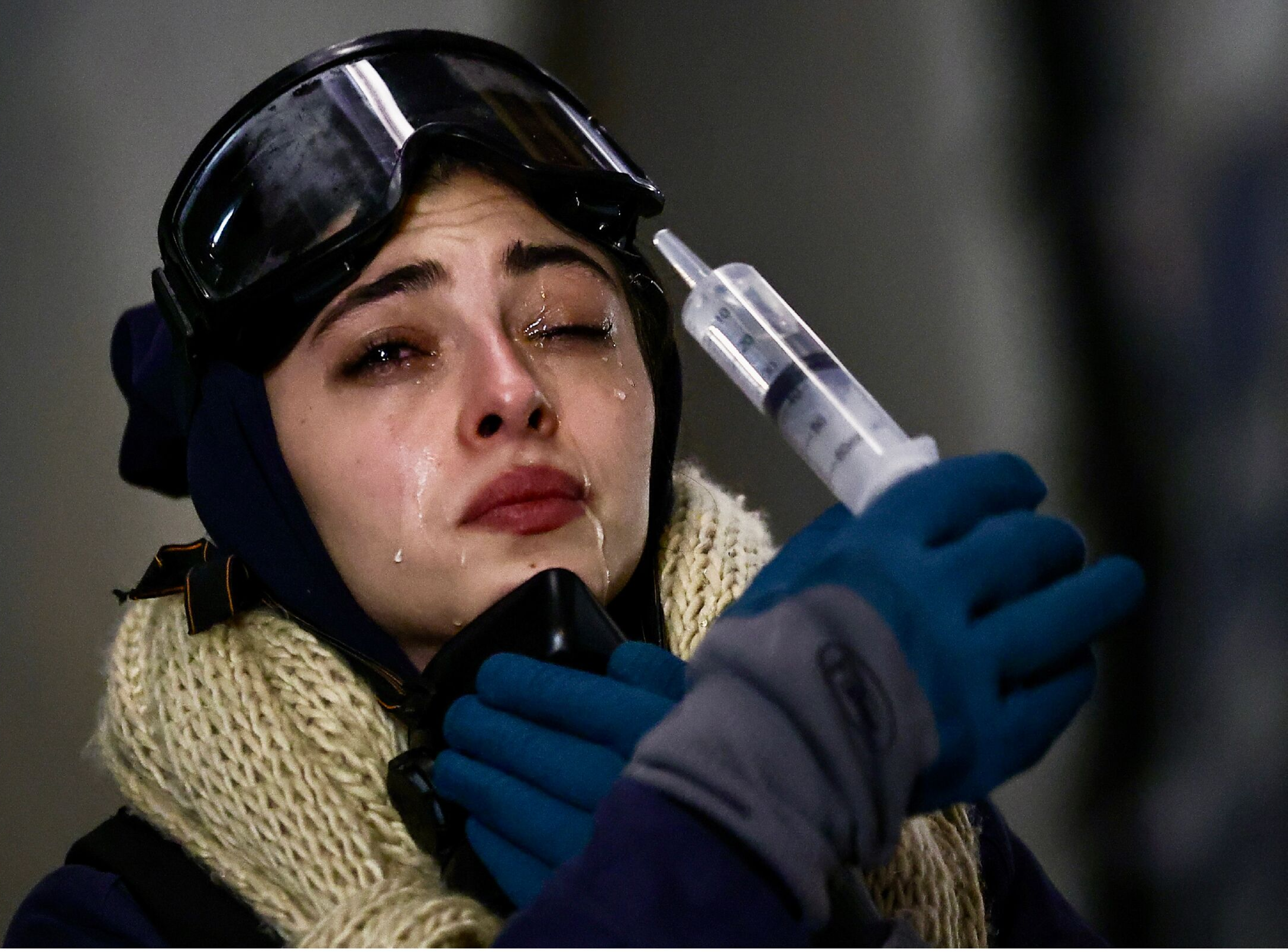
© Ali Jadallah, Anadolu Agency | Gaza Under Israeli Attack - An injured boy is treated at al-Aqsa Hospital, Deir al-Balah, after an Israeli attack on al-Maghazi refugee camp. The population of the camp tripled in the first months of the war. Gaza, 1 January 2024.



© Ali Jadallah, Anadolu Agency | Gaza Under Israeli Attack - Residents return to their homes in Khan Younis after an Israeli withdrawal on 7 April. In July and August, Israel would launch two more ground incursions into the southern city. Gaza, 9 April 2024.



© Kiana Hayeri, Fondation Carmignac | No Woman's Land - Some 700 young women manage to study at this private institute. However, they still cannot receive an official Afghan diploma or go on to university. Kabul, Afghanistan, 17 February 2024. In Afghanistan, the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban government denies women access to education beyond elementary school, bars them from most work outside the home, and in some regions forbids them from leaving home without a male guardian, or with their face uncovered. The spaces where women once gathered freely – schools, parks, gyms, beauty salons, and offices – are now off limits. Despite these restrictions, Afghan women find subtle but powerful ways to resist. Their defiance unfolds quietly behind closed doors: in homes, secret classrooms, and in private celebrations.



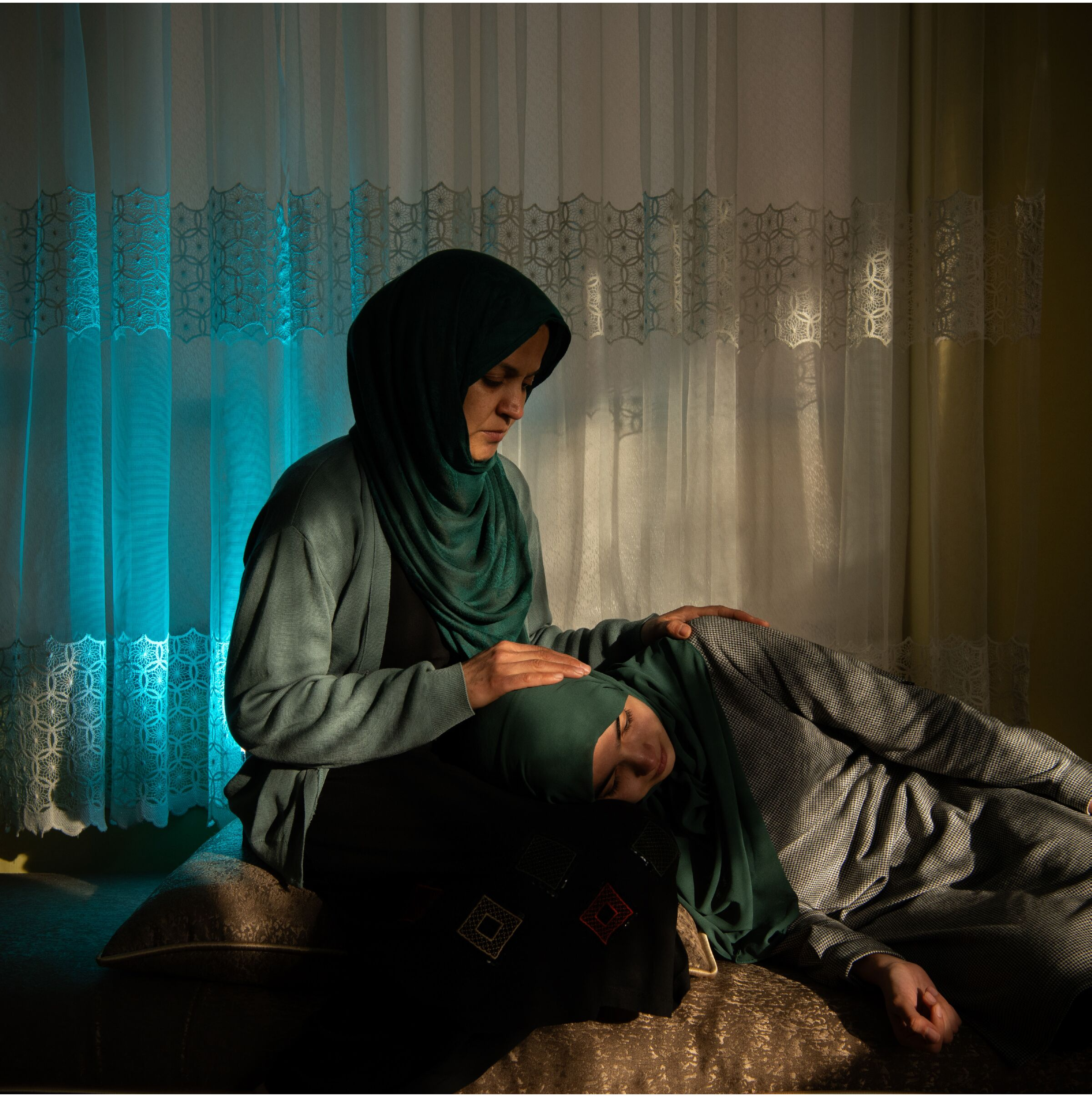
© Mikhail Tereshchenko, TASS Agency | Protests in Georgia - A protester rinses her eyes after police have deployed tear gas. She wears a protective ski mask, respirator, and gardening gloves (to pick up hot gas containers). Tbilisi, Georgia, 7 December 2024.

Press Freedom is important

In many countries around the globe, there is no freedom of the press. In numerous cases, photojournalists are not allowed to travel to cover events, or if they are present, they do not or cannot accurately report what is happening. If they do, they can face lengthy prison sentences, violence and intimidation. Moreover, there has been an increase in governments failing to protect photojournalists, which has resulted in a decline in support for media autonomy but also a significant increase in the photojournalists' death toll. Despite this risk and life-threatening conditions, journalists continue to dedicate their lives to capturing news photographs. They persist because they believe it is vital to show the outside world what is truly occurring.

For more reading, go to:

www.worldpressphoto.org/education/see-the-story



© Kiana Hayeri, Fondation Carmignac | No Woman's Land - Wazhmah sits at home with her daughter Tahmeena (19). Wazhmah's own education was halted during Taliban control in the 1990s, and she now sees history repeating itself. Kabul, Afghanistan, 6 February 2024.

“

Despite the risk and life-threatening conditions, journalists continue to dedicate their lives to capturing news photographs.

© Ingrid Koedood | Faces of Resilience

Faces of Resilience

Ingrid Koedood

Faces of Resilience captures the quiet strength of people living and working in the harshest corners of Bangladesh. Amid shipyards, brick kilns, and railway tracks, this series honours their dignity, humour, and humanity—revealing not poverty, but perseverance. It invites us to witness, not with pity, but with deep respect.

“In Bangladesh, amidst the dust of brick kilns, the shipyards, and the chaos of railway tracks, I encountered something unexpected: beauty. Not the polished kind, but the raw, defiant beauty of survival.
Faces of Resilience is a tribute to the strength of people who persist with grace, humour and courage, even in the harshest conditions. My pictures are not merely scenes of poverty; they are portraits of humanity - vibrant, complex, and unbreakable. I was not there to judge or to rescue. I was there to witness. I aimed to see people not as victims, but as individuals with dignity and agency. This series invites you to look closely - not with pity, but with respect. These faces belong to those who work hard, dream quietly, and laugh heartily, even when life gives them little reason to. Through my lens, I hope to amplify their voices. I seek to remind us that resilience is not always loud or heroic. Sometimes, it is simply the ability to smile whilst taking a shower on a railway track—and to keep going.

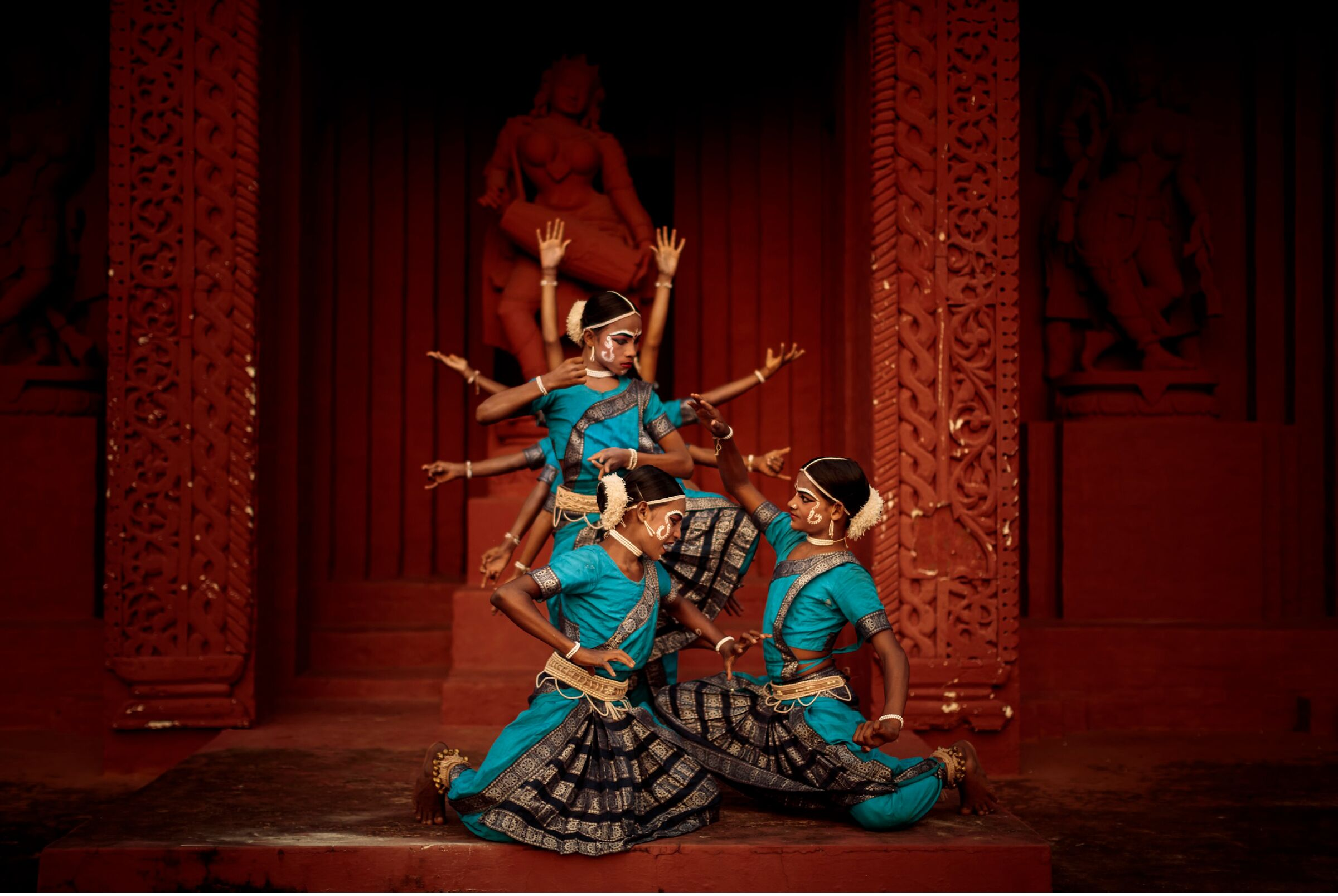
About

Ingrid Koedood is a Dutch photographer and travel guide who documents human resilience in marginalised communities across the globe. From slums to sacred rituals, her work captures dignity, strength, and colour in unexpected places. With a background in project management and a deep respect for cultural identity, Ingrid travels to places like Bangladesh, Niger, Chad, Algeria, and the Congo to tell powerful visual stories. Her portraits are intimate and honest—not merely images, but connections. Her series, Faces of Resilience, highlights the quiet strength of those who persevere in hardship.

www.ingridkoedood.photoshelter.com

© Ingrid Koedood | Faces of Resilience

All images © Ingrid Koedood | Faces of Resilience



Gotipua

Lucas Dragone

> “*Gotipua* is the poetry of devotion woven into movement, where young boys, adorned as the divine feminine, transcend their own form to become vessels of grace. *Gotipua* whispers that art is not merely seen; it is felt, lived, and ultimately a pathway to meditation.

About
Lucas Dragone, born in 1981, is an award-winning photographer. Having studied at the Lassaad International School of Theatre in Brussels, Lucas initiated a project in the past few years of documenting and capturing various forms of theatre from Asia and around the world through his camera.

www.studiolucasdragone.com

© Lucas Dragone | Gotipua

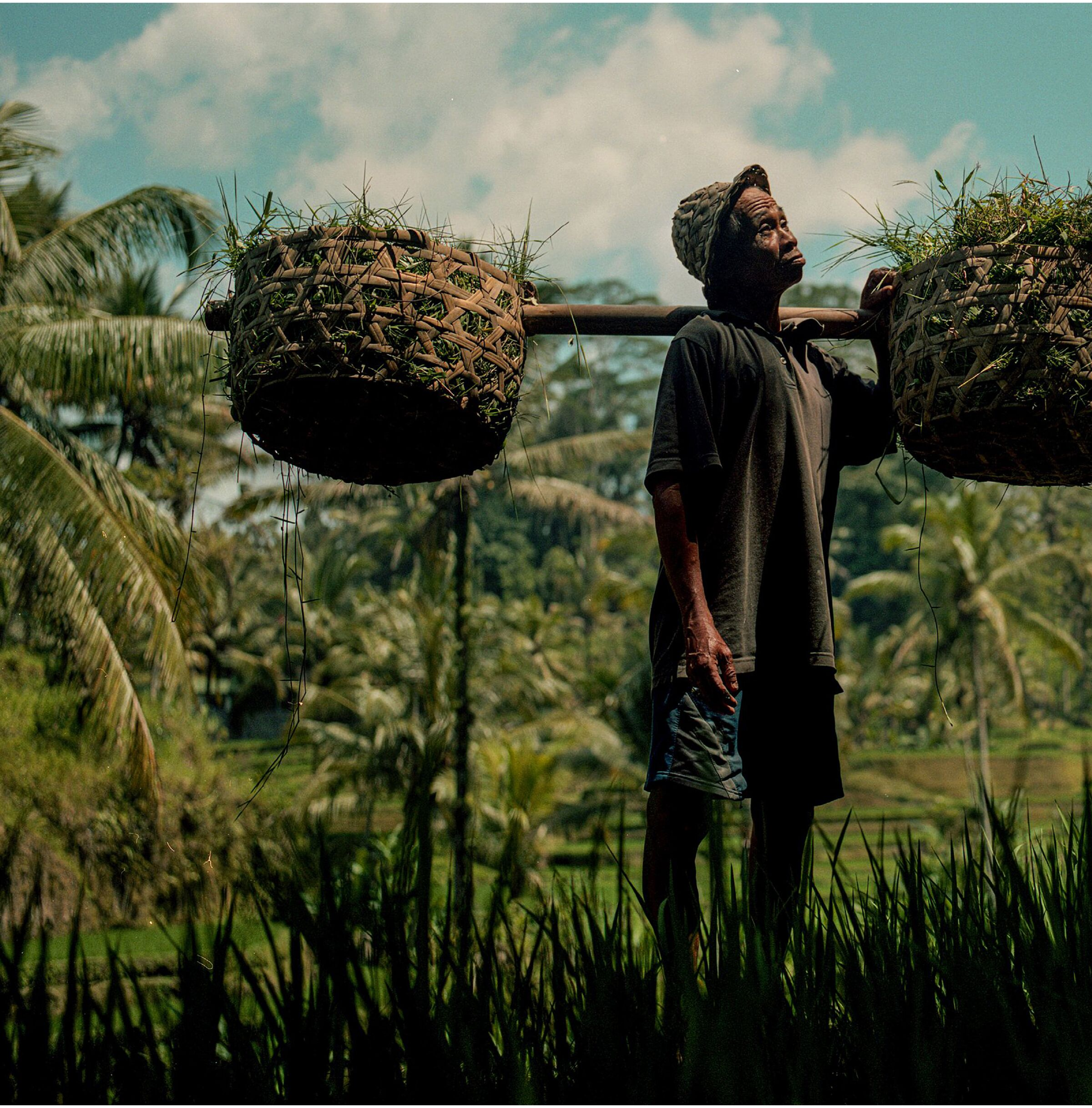
© Lucas Dragone | Gotipua

© Adam Docker | Soppo 'Frank' - Cameroon

Symbols of Movement and Transformation

Adam Docker

In the fast-flowing currents of modern life, Adam Docker is a seeker of emotional truth, often concealed in the faces of the crowd. Docker channels his understanding of human experience into moving images that resonate well beyond the frame. He prioritises human connection over mere effect.



© Adam Docker | Farmer - Bali

At the heart of Docker's work lie themes of resilience, identity, and belonging. "My photography is about emotional truth. I look for fleeting moments, a blur of movement, a particular look, a streak of light, the odd-looking face in the crowd that reveals something real," he reflects. This pursuit transcends technical perfection; it focuses on connection and the human story. Influenced by his extensive travels and documentary background, Docker seeks out small, significant moments that often pass unnoticed, elevating them through his lens. Docker's approach to the selection of his subjects is deeply intuitive. "Everything I shoot starts with a feeling. I don't chase after the perfect composition or the right light. I respond to energy, to mood, to the atmosphere of a place or person." Whether capturing a portrait, a cultural ritual, or an anonymous figure in a bustling street, his images are imbued with narrative intent. "There's always a narrative thread, even in my more abstract or experimental images," he notes. This storytelling instinct, rooted in his documentary filmmaking experience, invites viewers into a shared space of empathy and reflection.

Emotional lens

Docker's personal experiences profoundly shape the emotional tone of his work. "Photography has become something deeper for me. It brings me joy. It's how I connect to people, to the energy of a place, to something bigger than myself." Unlike the extractive nature of film, Docker sees photography as a gift. He frequently returns with prints for his subjects, fostering genuine connections with the people he encounters. "In a world that moves so fast, where everything feels digital and disposable, offering someone a tangible image of themselves brings a lot of joy."

© Adam Docker | Jona - Lesotho

© Adam Docker | Sea Gypsy - Borneo

Docker aspires to evoke profound, visceral responses from his audience. “In a world oversaturated with disposable visuals, I want my work to slow people down, to invite them to spend time with the photograph, to connect with the subject or the scene in a way that lingers. I want them to feel something real. It might be joy, sadness, nostalgia, curiosity, but ultimately, I hope they feel moved.” To facilitate this connection, he favours large-scale prints. “There’s something powerful about standing in front of a large-scale print. You’re not just looking at it, you’re stepping into it, feeling it.”

Amplifying humanity

While not driven by a singular cause, Docker is keenly aware of photography’s potential to foster empathy. “I’ve worked in slums and disaster areas, witnessing a lot of famine, poverty, misery and human tragedy. I have also documented moments of beauty and strength and celebration.” His work amplifies stories that might otherwise be overlooked, offering dignity and presence. “If it can inspire conversations about identity, belonging, inequality or resilience, then I’ve done something worthwhile.”

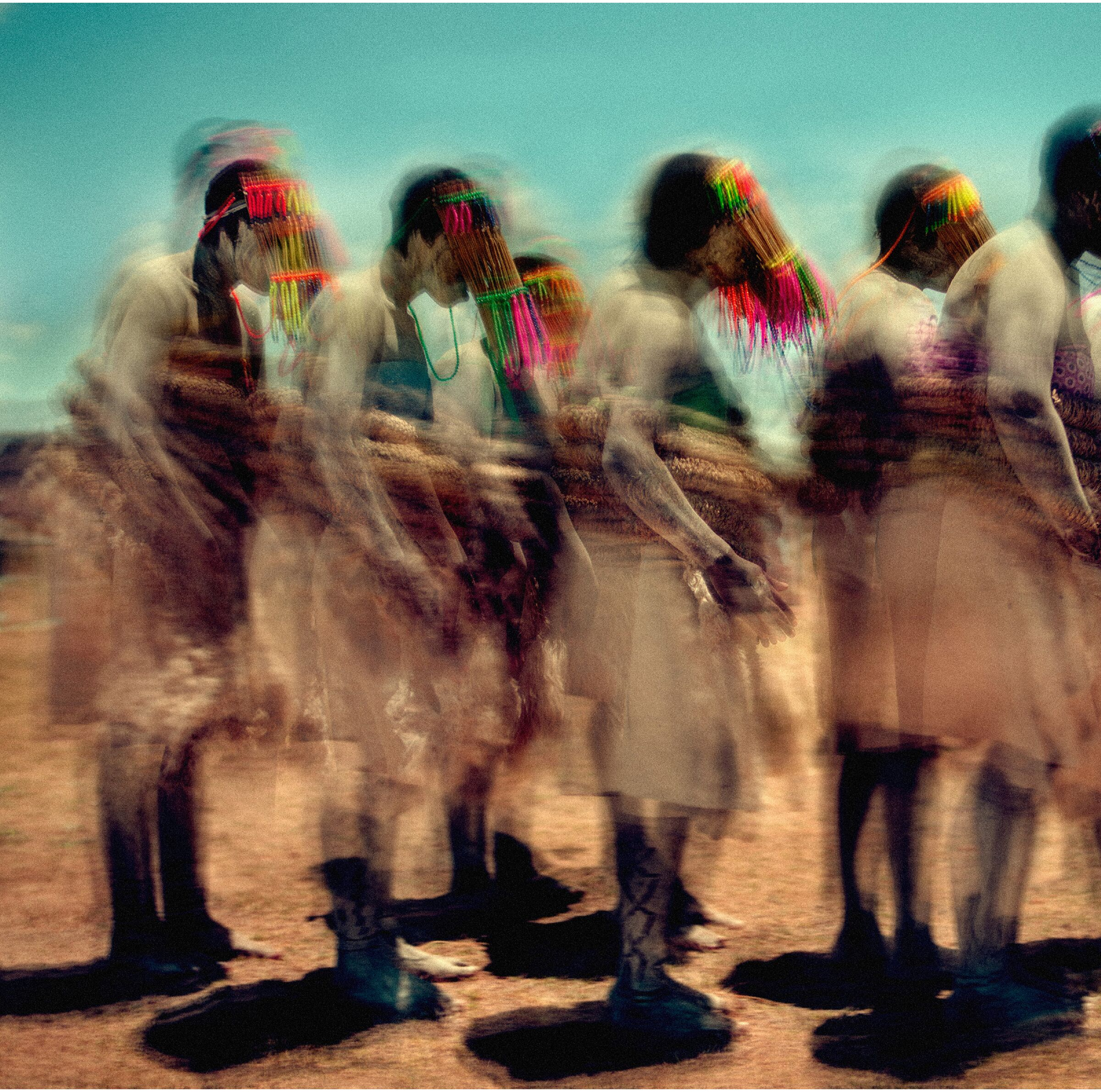
Docker sees portraiture as a powerful invitation for dialogue. “Showing someone’s portrait, giving space to their story, can change perceptions and spark deeper understanding.” His recent exhibition *Motion and Emotion* exemplified this philosophy, inviting audiences to explore what connects us and what it means to witness the world through another’s eyes.

Emotional atmospheres

Technically, Docker approaches each photograph as a unique canvas. “I treat each photo individually. I don’t believe in a fixed aesthetic.” Light, texture, motion blur, and layering are tools he wields to convey mood and meaning. “Sometimes I let motion blur tell the story; other times, I freeze a subject in stark clarity.” His willingness to experiment ensures that each image reflects not just a visual moment but also an emotional state.

> “ Showing someone’s portrait, giving space to their story, can change perceptions and spark deeper understanding.

© Adam Docker | Liela Mousa Medan - London



© Adam Docker | Dance Into Womanhood - Lesotho

Recurring motifs in Docker's work include movement and transition. "Movement, for me, represents transition, emotion, and a state of becoming. It speaks to the fluidity of life, the fact that nothing is fixed and everything is in motion." This motif resonates with his own life of constant travel. "Driving in foreign cities in the backseat of a taxi, I'll roll the window down and just point my camera out, trying to capture instantaneous moments, without a fixed expectation. Those are the moments that feel the most alive, unfiltered, imperfect and emotionally honest."

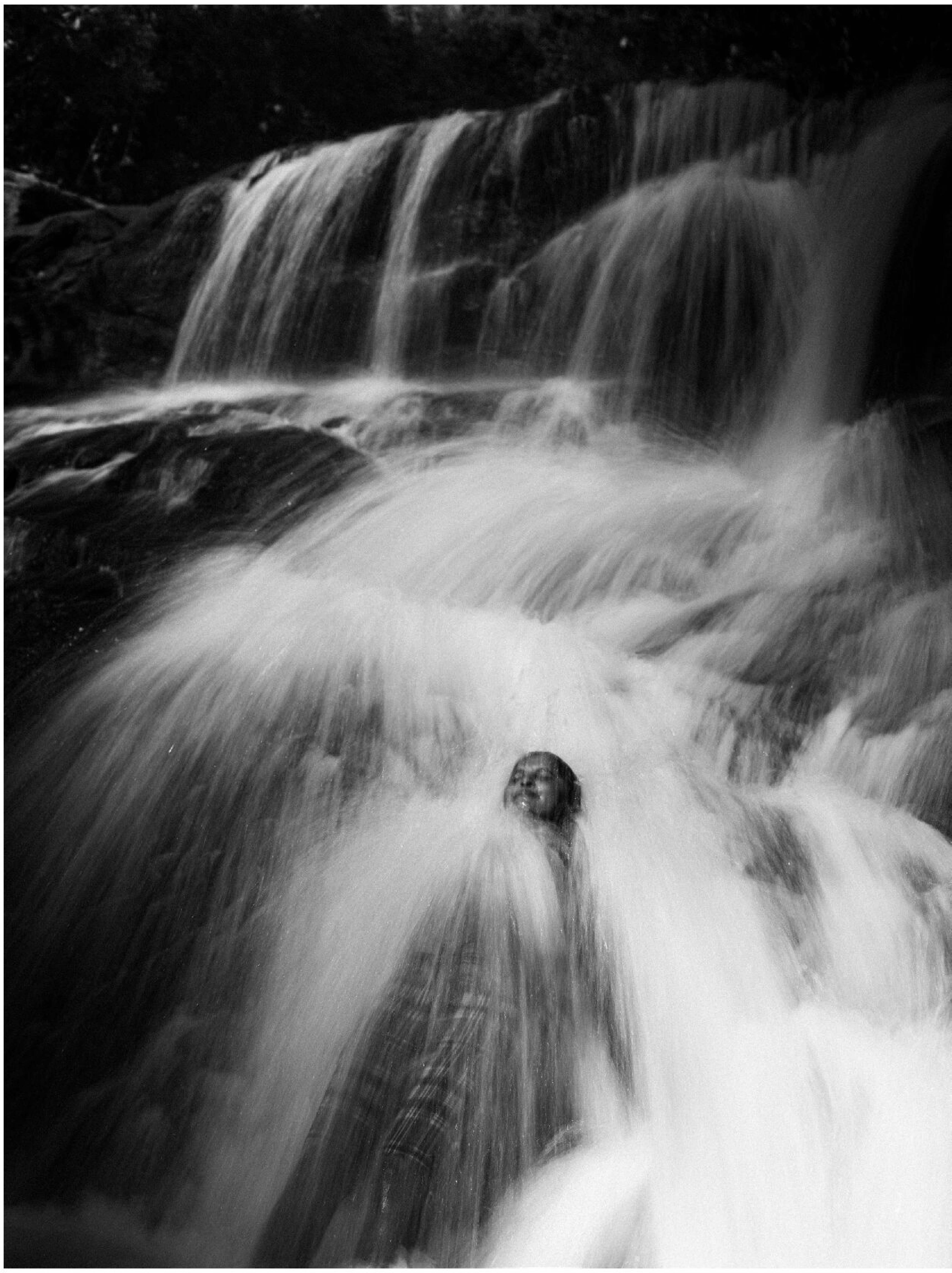
No final destination

Looking forward, Docker embraces photography as a realm of creative freedom. "Right now, I'm excited by the freedom photography gives me. In my job as a cinematographer, I'm bound by briefs and expectations. Photography is my place to escape those limitations." He explores themes of human behaviour and identity. "Ultimately, I am constantly evolving, being inspired, trying new techniques, keeping it real. My process is organic, intuitive and rooted in genuine experience."

In a world obsessed with perfection and speed, Docker's work shows the power of people's authenticity and their emotional resonance. "Art is like a drug. Every photograph brings a dopamine rush until the next one." It is this restless curiosity and commitment to emotional truth that ensures Docker's work will continue to captivate and move audiences for years to come.

© Adam Docker | Football in the Sunset - Sri Lanka

© Adam Docker I Water Fight - Cuba



© Adam Docker I Waterfall - Sri Lanka

About

Adam Docker is an award-winning photographer and cinematographer whose work captures the raw essence of humanity and culture. Having travelled and filmed in over 90 countries, Adam draws inspiration from the diverse stories, faces, and environments he encounters. Known for his painterly travel imagery and emotionally charged portraits, his photography explores themes of resilience, identity, and the interplay between struggle and beauty. Twice a British Journal of Photography's Portrait of Humanity winner, he has also been recognized as a LensCulture Street Photography Finalist. Through his lens, Adam crafts compelling narratives that challenge perceptions and inspire deep reflection.

www.adamdocker.art

© Adam Docker I WAP Girl - Portugal

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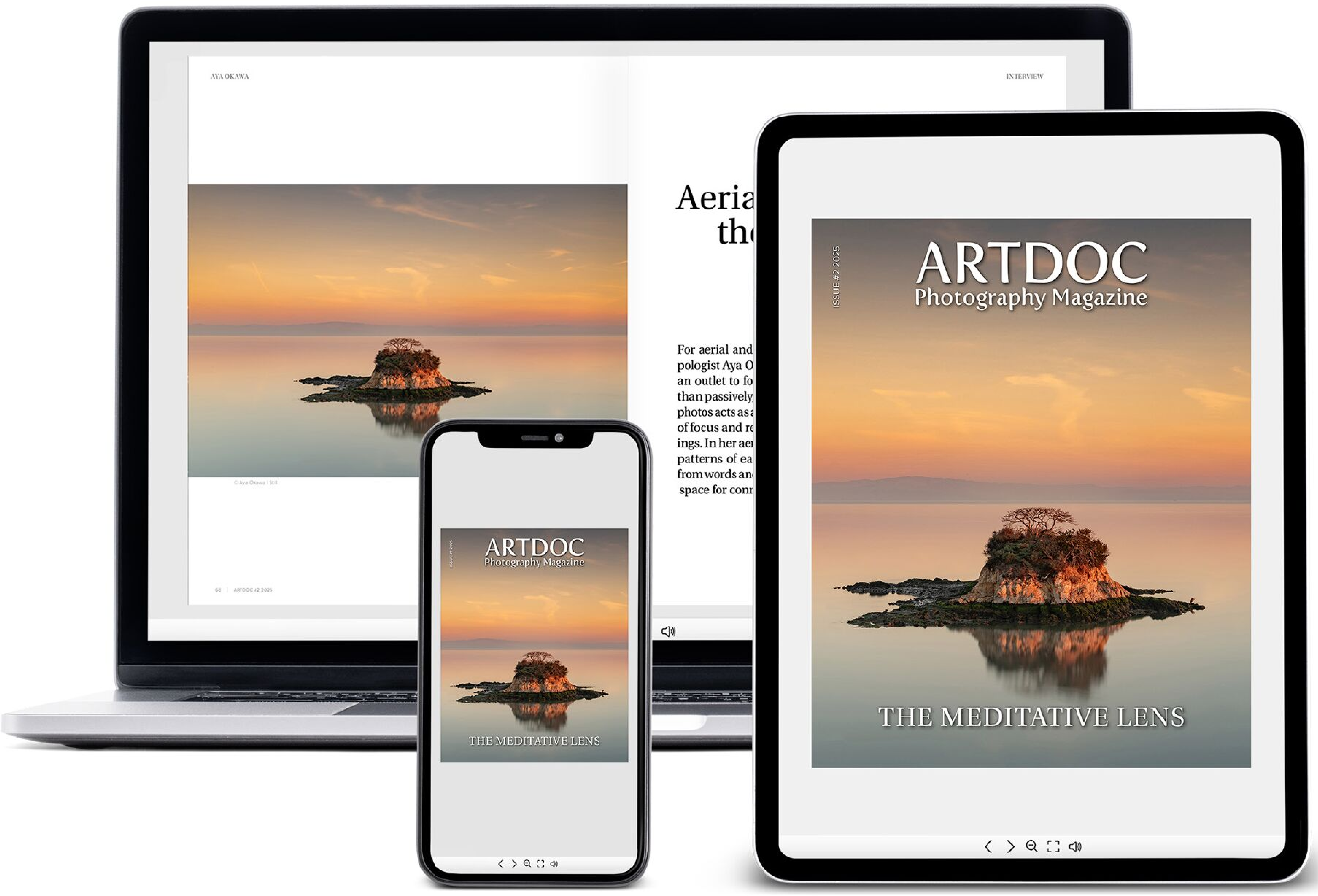
> If it can inspire conversations about identity, belonging, inequality or resilience, then I’ve done something worthwhile.
>
> \- Adam Docker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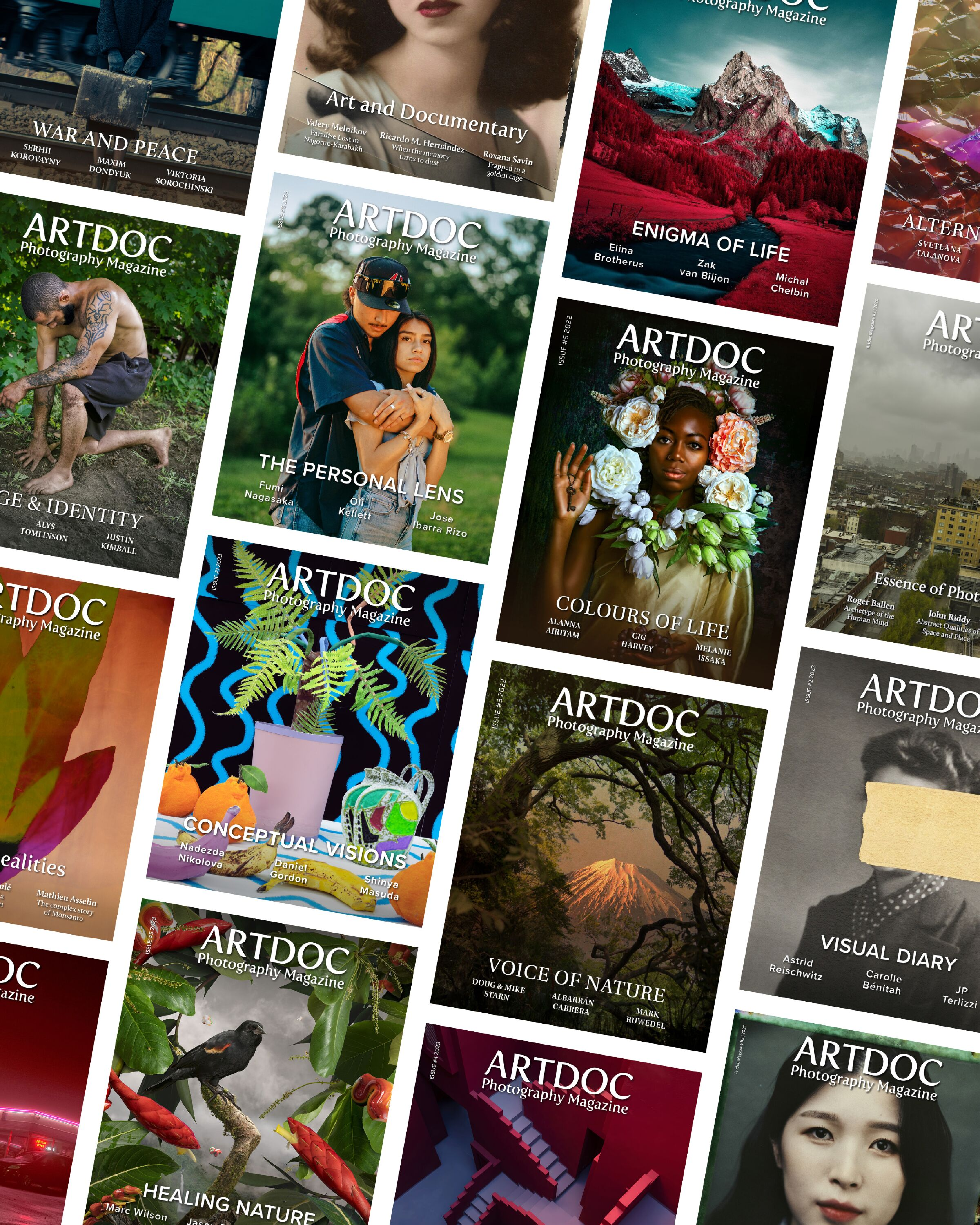
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We believe that photography is the most relevant global plastic form of art. Photography is a tool to communicate about the world that surrounds us and our feelings about it. Photography is the visual storytelling medium of our time, and it's deeply pervaded in the veins of our society and culture. Photographers tell stories that matter and can influence thoughts and feelings about ourselves and about our society, whereas the conventional media is continually constricted by political and corporates interests, while visual storytellers are the consciousness of modern society.

The art of photography is not limited to the aesthetics of the images themselves but encompasses the story behind them. Photography is the art that combines reality and vision, feeling and truth, psychological depth, and political awareness.

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